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1914 Repeats Itself

Now that the catastrophe is upon us and Europe is again going through the hell of war, those old enough to remember 1914 will be struck by the parallels between this world conflict and the last. Already the propaganda machines are working at top speed. When President Roosevelt asked both sides to refrain from bombing civilians and unfortified cities, each side promptly stated that it would do so if the enemy would give a similar promise. In the war of 1914-18 promises to obey the rules of civilized war were invariably the preliminary to violating them. When the "Athenia" was sunk on September 3, the Germans hastily denied that they were responsible. Hitler's reply to the British declaration of war was a charge that England and France were beginning an unprovoked war at the behest of Jewish international bankers. Before the war was two days old, accusations of the use of poison gas were being made and repudiated. Meanwhile censorship clamped down on news from every front, whether transmitted by cable or radio. And everyone older than thirty-five has the sense of having heard it all before.

The "Athenia"

Details of the sinking of the "Athenia" are still incomplete as this issue of The New Republic goes to press. There seems no doubt, however, that she was sunk by a German submarine—and this in spite of the denials from Berlin. Captain James Cook says the vessel was hit by a torpedo and that the submarine then rose and fired two shells, one of which carried away the mainmast. Captain Cook believes the intention was to destroy the wireless room, which would have prevented the sending of an SOS. It is difficult to understand what net advantage the Germans could gain by torpedoing a ship leaving Britain—and hence not carrying war supplies—especially when it was bearing American refugees. If it proves that there was heavy loss of life among the 300-odd Americans on board, indignation in this country will be very great. Never was it more urgent that we should keep our heads and refrain from rash and hasty action.

The President and Neutrality

In the President's radio speech following the outbreak of war there were, aside from the generalities to be expected on such an occasion, two important themes. One was that this country could not expect to remain unaffected by the conflict. The other was emphasis and reëmphasis that he wanted to keep us out of war. These statements undoubtedly laid the groundwork for defense against the anticipated charge that, in asking Congress to amend the neutrality law, he will be striving to bring us nearer the verge of war rather than to protect us against its shocks and to create, as he significantly and emphatically said, "a real neutrality." All indications go to show that he will demand the cash-and-carry policy, applied to all war exports as well as to munitions. We earnestly hope this is the case, and that Congress this time will heed his plea.

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It is unfortunate that so far the emphasis has been laid upon lifting the absolute embargo on arms, rather than on the cash-and-carry plan. It is not half so important whether we export munitions or not as whether our exports, whatever they may be, shall pass out of our jurisdiction the moment they leave our shores. Most sinister of all is the plan of certain conservative Republicans to repeal the neutrality law entirely in the interest of war profits. That would leave us in the same situation as before 1917; nothing would more quickly and surely involve us.

Who Wants to Fight?

One curious fact about public opinion in the United States, demonstrated by the conversation of the people one meets and by popular polls, is that while almost nobody wants this nation to participate in the war, a large majority believes that eventual participation is "inevitable." Just what do they mean by that? A democratic nation, the great majority of whose citizens do not want to enter a war between foreign powers, can hardly be compelled to do so. Perhaps they think the country can be drawn in against its will by "international bankers" or munitions makers or other modern devils. Perhaps they do not think at all, but simply have been bulldozed by reiterated words, like those which justified our entrance into the last war as "inevitable" or those of the propagandists for the League of Nations and collective security, who have told us over and over again, without any real attempt to prove their argument, that if a general European war broke out, we could not help joining it. The obvious fact that other nations much nearer the conflict stayed out last time, and are doing so now, does not occur to those who accept these slogans.

It seems likely to us, however, that many of those who talk in this way really mean something much simpler. In part of their minds they already want to get into the fight. They suspect that things are likely to happen which will make them—and a majority of their fellow citizens—find this inner impulse irresistible. It would help us to make up our minds sensibly if we admit this fact, instead of blaming fate for the call to arms. When inevitability makes us fight, we have no choice, but when we ourselves want to fight we can still exercise reason and restraint.

Air Raids

President Roosevelt's request that the belligerents refrain from air bombing of open cities and towns, coupled with the favorable replies from them, is likely to have little practical effect in a war like that which has now begun. What is an unarmed city, and how can it be distinguished from a military objective? All large and important centers in the nations engaged, as well as many small ones, are likely to be protected by anti-aircraft batteries, and this can be interpreted as fortification. All such centers, moreover, may contain military headquarters, docks, railroad yards and stations, factories manufacturing war materials, warehouses or other nerve centers that could be legitimate military objectives. Air bombing from great heights, especially under conditions of darkness or cloudiness favorable to the attackers, so lacks precision that projectiles may land wide of the mark; civilians are likely to be killed in any case. This gives any power that wishes to do so an excuse to retaliate.

Bombings of civilian populations for purely terroristic purposes, such as Japan has carried out in China and Franco in Spain, have occurred in parts of the world where industrial development is not widespread and one side has great aerial superiority over the other. For assurance against this sort of thing in the present war, we can rely only on the caution of military authorities, who presumably will not want to risk their planes and aviators for actions which aid little in winning a war. Air raids are almost sure to occur over London and Paris, but they are likely to be carried out by relatively small squadrons and aimed at military objectives. Continuous mass bombings sufficient to ruin a big city or terrorize the government into surrender could be attempted only at the peril of permanent air superiority and loss of the war, if they did not succeed in their immediate purpose.

Mr. Chamberlain's Record

The outbreak of war throws a dazzling backward light on the record of the British government. It is now seen to be one of almost incredible bungling and folly. Letting Hitler occupy the Rhineland and rearm Germany were only the earliest of a series of blunders. England drove Italy into the Axis by applying, during the Ethiopian war, sanctions not strong enough to stop Mussolini, but strong enough to cause deep anger among all Italians. When Baldwin and Chamberlain connived at the death of Loyalist Spain, they helped destroy an important potential ally; Franco may be neutral, but if he is, such neutrality will probably be almost as useful to Germany as active participation would have been. The British government connived at the destruction of Austria, which increased Hitler's strength. Mr. Chamberlain at Munich agreed to the destruction of Czecho-Slovakia, "the bastion of Europe," which would have been of the greatest value against Germany. Finally, and worst mistake of all, he made no real attempt to come to an understanding with Russia. Mr. Brailsford in his article on page 148 of this issue shows that the negotiations were carried on by the British in a seemingly deliberate effort to have them break down. If Mr. Chamberlain had decided years ago to fight Germany on the terms least advantageous to Great Britain and with a maximum opportunity for defeat, we do not know how he would have altered his course.

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Watching the Soviet Cat

Will the Soviet Union continue to walk the fence? Germany clearly wants to create the impression that Russia will jump in on her side, and the arrival in Berlin of a new ambassador familiar with the Soviet economy, accompanied by a military mission, enables Nazi propagandists to emphasize this view. Berlin strives by every means to strengthen the belief that there is a secret military agreement, or that there will be one, behind the non-aggression treaty, and that the two powers have decided upon the partition of Poland. At the same time there is talk of a non-aggression pact between Japan and the Soviet Union, an event which would cast doubt on the theory that Stalin had decided to remain neutral in the West in order to have a free hand in the East. But from Moscow quite a different story is heard. Premier Molotov clearly indicated in his speech to the parliament that the Soviet Union will probably confine her activities to selling goods, and will sell them to both sides. As to the amount of economic help which Germany can derive in this way, there is a good deal of doubt. The productive capacity of the USSR has increased at an amazing speed, but its capacity for consumption has increased even faster. The London Economist points out that in spite of the Soviet Union's vast resources, it has only small exportable surpluses. And the Reich will have to pay in bartered goods. Will Germany mobilized for war be able to spare much of the machinery or other manufactured products that the Soviet Union may require? If the Soviet authorities should be cool toward the German cause, they could find plenty of economic reasons for denying much help.

The Comintern Walks the Plank

The worst sufferer from the Russo-German pact was not Poland or Japan but the Communist International. For the last six years it had been standing on a single plank, that of unity against fascism. In order to achieve unity with even the conservative anti-fascists, it had been deferring or neglecting most of its positive program. It had met with some disastrous defeats—notably in Spain—but it had also succeeded in changing public opinion. The British decision to resist Hitler was partly a Comintern achievement. But the moment of this decision was also the moment that Stalin chose to pull the one plank out from under the Comintern's feet. The national parties that compose it were left floating in midair, not knowing where to find a solid basis for international policy.

And Moscow made it clear that they were being deserted. Before the International Youth Day Celebration on September 6, a list of fifteen slogans was issued to the Russian Komsomols. Last year the slogans had dealt with fascist aggression. This year fascism was not even mentioned. Last year the seventh slogan was, "Bolshevist greetings to the revolutionary proletariat of Germany, to the heroic Communist Party of Germany. Long live Comrade Thaelmann." This year the slogan runs, "Long live the wise foreign policy of the Soviet Union, guided by Comrade Stalin's instructions: 'Do not let the country be drawn into a conflict by war provocators who want us to pull their chestnuts out of the fire.'" Last year the final slogan praised Comrade Dimitrov, "the glorious pilot of the Comintern." This year the glorious pilot has been dropped astern.

And the American Communists Follow

Meanwhile the leaders of the American Communist Party, the CPUSA, continue to insist that Russia's treaty with Germany was a great stroke for international peace and democracy. There is of course much to be said for the treaty in terms of Russia's strict self-interest, as we wrote last week. The contention of the American Communists, however, seems to us pure nonsense. The best evidence of this is that not one of them, so far as we can learn, proposed any such thing at any time prior to August 22, when the bombshell burst upon the world. We can recall no article in The New Masses or The Daily Worker prior to that time, advocating any arrangement with Germany. Mr. Browder has just published a book of his speeches which so far as we know is equally innocent of the proposal. In Charlottesville, Virginia, Mr. Browder made a speech on July 5. Questioned as to whether a Russo-German agreement was possible he replied: "The most effectual source of such rumors is Berlin, which has hopes of confusing the democracies with such stories. There is about as much chance of such an agreement as of Earl Browder being elected president of the American Chamber of Commerce." Up till this time the Communists have enjoyed a prestige that was largely based on their foresight in political affairs, national and international. That prestige will be hard to recover.

Peace on Broadway, Anyhow

The victory of the actors in their fight with the stagehands' union is a tribute to the cohesion and resolute leadership of the actors' federation, the Associated Actors and Artistes of America. Probably it was partially due to behind-the-scenes pressure from the national office of the AFL—to which both unions belong—horrified by the broad hints from the actors that they were considering swinging over to the CIO. But, whatever the causes, the victory was complete. The stagehands' union agreed to smother the American Federation of Actors, its new union, and to recognize that the Four A's had complete jurisdiction over all performers in the amusement and entertainment world. In return the Four A's will admit to its member unions all the members of the AFA, and it has lifted the

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suspensions of Sophie Tucker and Harry Richman. To prevent a recurrence of the controversy the two unions will work out an agreement like the one now existing between the stagehands' and musicians' unions. As a secondary result, Mr. Vinton Freedley's "Leave It to Me" has reopened, with Sophie Tucker in her leading role, and New Yorkers no longer face the prospect of being deprived of all stage entertainment by a jurisdictional strike. The Theatrical Managers', Agents' and Treasurers' Union has not yet settled its fight with the stagehands—who are still raiding its jurisdiction—and has threatened to strike. But it is doubtful that this small union could tie up Broadway without the actors' help.

Week-end in the Country

Millions of Americans will all their lives remember the Labor Day week-end as a terrible and tragic time. The ubiquitous radio has destroyed any possibility of getting away from the world and its cares. Wherever one went, the raucous voice of the loud speaker followed with its news from London, Paris, Berlin, Warsaw. It is hard to conceive that members of this generation will ever need to listen to more dreadful tidings. The reporters and interpreters were indefatigable and some of them extremely able; special mention should go to Elmer Davis of Columbia Broadcasting and Raymond Gram Swing of Mutual. The experience of the week-end showed, however, that radio must quickly solve the problem of the transition from its serious moods to its lighter ones or to commercialism. It was nearly unendurable to have news that the "Athenia" with 1,500 passengers had been torpedoed at sea, interrupted or followed by sales talk about headache powder or cigars or by the mechanical parrotings of one of the eternal serial stories of family life. If some way out of this dilemma is not quickly found, radio will confront a nationwide demand for a government-owned series of stations which will not, as the private chains do in effect, tell you that your mother is dead and then instantly slap you with a toy balloon.

Enemy Propaganda

Now that Germany has issued decrees providing prison terms for anyone who listens to foreign radio broadcasts and death sentences for anyone who repeats them, we suggest a counter-move in the form of laws compelling those in the Allied and neutral nations to listen on pain of torture to the wearying and flat German radio propaganda issued in the guise of news. The natural effect would be, on the German side, to make people eager to know what they were missing and suspicious of their own information and, on the other side, to make listeners prefer castor oil, the rack and the thumb-screw to the torture of compulsory boredom.

Mobilize for Neutrality!

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH discussion about our foreign policy in the presence of European war, and ample preparation for the eventuality of involvement in war ourselves. Far too little, however, has been said about what we ought to do to safeguard our own economy against the shock which is bound to be felt if this country remains neutral while other great nations fight.

That new strains will be felt and new conditions will demand adjustment is obvious from our experiences between 1914 and 1917; we are already seeing signs of the development of a similar experience. These problems are essentially different from those with which we have been wrestling in our efforts to bring revival.

At the beginning, there is likely to be an unsettling effect, on account of unusual movements of money and markets, the disruption of normal foreign trade and shipping. After the initial shock, the warring nations will expand greatly their demands upon us for goods of many kinds, regardless of the type of neutrality legislation we may have.

This will change the normal character of our exports; it will create booms in some industries and hard times in others. There will be shortages in materials and labor, a tendency toward inflation of prices and profits. The pull of production for war purposes will distort our economy. Our task will be a double one—to mitigate hardships during this process, and to plan it in such a way that when it is over an orderly retreat will be possible, shifting back to a peace economy without the inflation and subsequent depression that followed the last war.

Apparently we do not have so much to fear as we had last time from the panic selling of foreign-owned securities on our stock market—a development that brought the closing down of the market for weeks at the outbreak of war. This time it is understood that securities owned in this country, as well as in other neutrals, by British and French nationals will be mobilized by their governments and liquidated in an orderly fashion, in order to conserve the cash purchasing-power of these countries abroad. It is both to our interest and to theirs that this be done; panic would serve the interest of neither side. They face a long war and do not want to use up all their purchasing power at once; neither do they wish to sell their securities, or borrow against them, at panic prices. We do not want a market disturbance, and we do not want too sudden an expansion of their purchases here. Great Britain has already taken the preliminary steps for control by discouraging foreign sales and export of capital. We ought to coöperate with her in this effort.

The foreign-exchange problem may also be troublesome. Already the pound sterling has been subject to pressure and has fallen considerably in terms of the

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dollar. It goes without saying that before long it will be pegged again as it was in the last war. Instrumentalities for doing so already exist, in the stabilization funds of the respective nations. Our power to devalue the dollar will give us a voice in the level at which it shall be pegged. At present, a low value of the pound in terms of the dollar is not so much an advantage to British business as in peace. A low pound means that Britain has an advantage in selling on international markets, but a disadvantage in buying. Now she will have less to sell and more to buy.

For the longer term, it will be essential to plan carefully. We need to know, first of all, what the Allies intend to buy from us. For this purpose it would serve our needs, as well as their own, if they would set up a unified purchasing agency with detailed schedules of demands. Such an agency would not merely supply useful advance information; it would forestall the inflationary effect of a dozen different large purchasing agencies, bidding prices up and ordering more than they really need. We, in turn, ought to have an emergency organization to deal with any untoward effects that might be foreseen. Would the demands on certain industries be so heavy that there would be shortages of materials or labor, soaring prices and confusion? In that case, priorities could be applied, and possibly even price controls as well, to protect our own consumers—and, incidentally, the purchasing belligerents. Would industries necessary to our welfare but unnecessary for war be adversely affected? Proper measures must be taken to counterbalance such effects.

The task would be not merely to readjust as smoothly as possible to the necessities of war production, but to prepare for the readjustment back. In the last war, for instance, the tremendous demand for wheat at high prices caused farmers, not merely to expand their acreage, but to buy large amounts of land. High land values, inflated mortgage debt and surplus production have since remained to plague us. This time we may be able to exercise intelligent control, through our many-sided agricultural administration, which can, among other things, set quotas and control credit. We can permit enlarged output, as far as necessary, but prepare to cut it down the moment foreign demand disappears after the war. We can discourage soaring land values and mortgage debt. The same sort of foresight might be applied also to industrial expansion due to war demand.

These are merely details—though essential details—of a much larger problem. For years our financial system has contained within it the seeds of a possible inflation of unprecedented magnitude. The credit resources have been there; the only reason inflation has not occurred is that there has been no business boom sufficient to set it off. But now, with rapidly soaring demand from belligerents, combined with a certain amount of domestic recovery, inflation becomes a real possibility. We ought instantly to prepare to check it before it gains too great a headway. This cannot be done merely by banking policy or fiscal measures. It requires a rounded plan for the emergency, with controls in reserve for production, prices and profits. Thanks to the New Deal, we are much better prepared than we were during the last war to devise and administer such controls. But, at the center, there needs to be a real planning agency to map out what ought to be done. There needs to be instant mobilization for the economic tasks of neutrality in the midst of war.

Who Will Win?

THE ONE QUESTION everyone asks is the one to which no answer is yet possible: Who will win this war? Aside from the usual dangers of prophecy, the answer is made impossible because we do not yet know how many countries will ultimately be engaged in the struggle. Major G. F. Eliot, the American military expert, believes there is absolutely no question that England, France and Poland can defeat Germany. Yet such a calculation leaves out of account Russia, Italy, Japan, the United States and Spain, to say nothing of the Balkan states, whose action may be crucial.

Hitler's strategy seems clear. He hopes to crush Poland in a few days or weeks and then turn his forces from the East to the West. In the meantime he counts upon the Westwall to hold back the French army, which is still generally described as the best in Europe. The British have blockaded the entrance to the Baltic and have closed the Mediterranean at Gibraltar and Suez. They have also conducted some bombing raids against German war vessels in harbor and some over German cities, in which the "bombs" were propaganda leaflets. If Germany's Westwall holds, it will be difficult for the Allies to get at Germany effectively and at once. If Italy could be persuaded to join England and France—which is certainly not out of the question—French troops could go around Switzerland to the south and come up through the Brenner into Austria. If this is not done, Hitler has a better chance of carrying out his reputed strategy: to crush Poland and then ask for peace on a basis of the status quo. It will be interesting to watch British and French propaganda to see whether they leave a loophole for such a development. So far they have emphasized a determination to fight to a finish.

In some ways this war resembles 1914 while in others it differs completely. The advance preparation has been far more thorough this time: England, for example, has hoarded foodstuffs and has instituted conscription immediately instead of waiting more than a year. The fortification of the French frontier seems to ensure that we shall not again see a great German rush into France and a long war fought on her soil.

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Military experts agree that Germany is far weaker now than in 1914. Her food and raw materials will not last indefinitely and she is too poor to buy large quantities beyond her borders. The morale of her people is also uncertain; some secretly hate the regime and the rest are probably overconfident and likely to be thrown into panic by serious reverses. Hitler must win quickly or not at all; the Allies can afford to wait. But this does not mean that Hitler may not be able to hold out a long time.

On the whole, each of these three countries enters the conflict in characteristic spirit. The Germans seem full of auto-hypnotic self-confidence. The French, weary but determined, are setting about a task they dislike but know has to be done. The British as usual are waking up slowly, muddling along but displaying the beginning of the dogged stick-to-it-iveness which is part of their national character. And they are slowly rumbling into position the resources from all over the world which will bulwark their staying power.

The Responsibility for War

WHEN A WAR HAS JUST BEGUN the one thing the world wants to know is who will win it. Hardly less important, however, is the second query, who was mainly responsible? This question is especially vital to democratic countries where the morale of the troops and of the population behind them depends so greatly on allocating the guilt.

In the long view, every participant in the present struggle, and several other powers, share some of the blame. Poland accepted in 1919 territory with a preponderantly German population, and has been an irritating neighbor on many subsequent occasions. Soviet Russia by her recent treaty of non-aggression apparently increased Hitler's confidence and may thereby have turned the scales in favor of the resort to arms. England and France at Munich a year ago greatly reduced the military effectiveness of any coalition against Hitler when they agreed to the destruction of Czecho-Slovakia. At the same time they strengthened Der Führer's belief that they would not stand up to him and encouraged him to make demands on Poland from which he would have found it difficult to withdraw.

Going even farther back, England and France imposed an unjust and destructive treaty upon Germany in 1919 and followed it for many years by repression. French policy under Poincaré was openly intended to keep Germany crushed forever. You may even, if you wish, argue that the responsibility rests with the United States. If we had not entered the War in 1917, a negotiated peace based on the stalemate of exhaustion would probably soon have taken place. We made possible the Allied victory which in turn produced the unjust treaties of 1919.

Such discussions of historical responsibility seem pallid today, however, against the undoubted fact that it is Hitler who chose the resource to arms. Whatever moral case he might have had for the return of territory and populations wrested from Germany in 1919 was destroyed when he seized Czecho-Slovakia, which had never been part of the Reich and is inhabited by a majority alien to Germany in race, language and culture. On abstract grounds, there is much to be said for giving Danzig and part of the Corridor back to Germany. But England, France and the whole world knew that such action would not bring peace; that it would be the prelude to fresh crises, additional demands for more territory, a renewed and imminent threat of war.

Much has certainly gone on behind the scenes that we do not know, and may not know for years, if ever. Yet many facts are already plain for the pages of history. We know beyond all reasonable doubt that at least a year ago the German Nazis had a timetable of conquest for all Europe which indicated that Danzig would be seized soon, to be followed year by year by large additional captures of territory, until the major part of Europe was under their terrible discipline.

We know that one after another, diplomats who saw Hitler during the fateful ten days before the Polish cities were bombed on September 1, came away pale and frightened, declaring that he meant to make war.

We have the word of the Poles that his sixteen points were never given to them for consideration until they were revealed to the world late in the evening of August 31.

We have the assurance of diplomats that there is no precedent in international usage for the demand that a Polish emissary be sent to Berlin to receive and accept the terms of the Hitler ultimatum.

We have the evidence of Mme. Tabouis, writing in last week's New Republic, in an article composed nine days before hostilities began, that the Germans were about to create false "disorders" along the border and "attacks" by the Poles. Even if we did not have such testimony as hers and that of other trained journalists, the history of September, 1938, and March, 1939, in relation to Czecho-Slovakia would be ample, when the same tactics were used and their fraudulent character was exposed before the world.

Finally, it is indelibly written in the record that German airplanes attacked Polish towns at 5:45 A.M. on the morning of September 1, before any declaration of war, before any Polish aggression that could possibly have justified such a thing. Herr Hitler, having told Poland what he wanted, murdered a few hundred innocent people simply by way of underlining his demands.

Every other nation in Europe, during August, 1939, wanted peace. The overwhelming majority of the German people wanted peace. Only their leader and a few of his associates, driven by the demon of their own past follies, wanted war.

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The Truth About the CIO

About a year ago Mr. Benjamin Stolberg attracted a good deal of attention to himself. He wrote a series of articles in the Scripps-Howard newspapers violently attacking the CIO, largely on the ground that Communists control many activities of the organization and are not seeking to advance the cause of labor but that of revolution. Mr. Stolberg has now rehashed his material in an article in The Saturday Evening Post. He adds the charge that the CIO is dwindling rapidly and now has only about 1,200,000 members, while the AFL is flourishing.

So far as can be judged, Mr. Stolberg has swallowed whole the propaganda of the AFL. He seems to count as members of the CIO not all members of CIO unions but only those for whom per-capita taxes have been paid to the central office. Such figures are wholly unrealistic. Unions sometimes pay less per-capita than they have, especially when they are young and rapidly expanding. On the other hand, everyone in labor circles knows that some AFL unions habitually pay per-capita dues on a far greater membership than they actually possess, because of the voting strength they gain thereby. Thus the carpenters lost 100,000 lumber workers but continued to pay assessments on the previous numerical strength. The CIO membership, as reported at the last convention, was 3,787,877, after subtracting the membership of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. CIO officials assert that at the next convention a net gain for the year will be shown.

If Mr. Stolberg were right, the AFL would be about three times as important in the labor movement as the CIO. What are the facts? In elections under the National Labor Relations Board in the past two years, two and one-half times as many workers have voted for the CIO as for the AFL (108,187 against 41,677). In thirty-one elections in which CIO and AFL unions competed the CIO won seventeen, the AFL only seven. Last year the CIO participated in 582 elections and won 58 percent, the AFL in 463 and won 47 percent. In the first and second quarters of 1939 the CIO won 44 percent and 67 percent of the plant elections in which it appeared. The AFL won only 28 percent and 56 percent. Efforts by the AFL to break down CIO unions have been unsuccessful. This is true of the auto workers, the coal miners in Illinois, the textile trade, the longshoremen, flat-glass workers and sailors.

Meanwhile the AFL has been having trouble within its own ranks. Many of its workers have obviously been disturbed by the tie-up between William Green and the National Association of Manufacturers, for the purpose of weakening the Wagner Act by amendments. A number of local and international unions are under discipline or threat of it. The important Typographical Union has refused to pay an assessment to be devoted to fighting the CIO. The American Federation of Radio Artists, like the typographers, is fighting amendments to the Wagner Act. Brewery workers and teamsters are two additional groups that are in trouble with Mr. Green.

As for Mr. Stolberg's charges of communism, they hardly need to be answered again in detail. He offers no evidence that the rank and file in any union objects to the policies pursued by the leaders whom he accuses of radicalism, or that any union has lost members because of this. There was no Communist issue in the withdrawal of the ILGWU, or the defection of Francis Gorman in textiles; on the contrary Gorman was the only CIO textile-union leader who had repeatedly been attacked by AFL leaders as a Communist or associate of Communists. In most cases Mr. Stolberg covers himself up by saying that the CIO officials he attacks are "fellow travelers" or "followers of the party line." Such phrases are carefully calculated to do the maximum damage in the eyes of public opinion with a minimum of danger of libel suits.

The CIO is feared and disliked by some employers, not because its leaders are radicals with their heads in the clouds but precisely because they are shrewd and realistic union bargainers. Their record of achievement speaks for itself. Those who attack them do so in reality not because they fear John L. Lewis has a Red flag rolled up in his pocket but because he has organized hundreds of thousands of workers whom the AFL had always ignored. If the CIO were weak and dying as he says, Mr. Stolberg would not bother to write his diatribe or The Saturday Evening Post to print it. It is for this reason that his article will in our judgment do little harm. No one will take it seriously except those who were already gasping with rage over the CIO; and to these it supplies little ammunition.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Two Views of the Russian Pact

I: Causes and Consequences

EUROPE HAS BECOME in recent years the finishing school for cynics. If Munich was the kindergarten, Moscow is the graduates' class. The cool observer of Stalin's recent performance is ready to concede that he may have had plausible reasons for breaking off the negotiations with Great Britain and France for the formation of a Triple Alliance directed against Nazi aggression. But to proceed at the same instant to make with Hitler a pact of neutrality, on the eve of his expected attack on Poland, was a violation of public morality for which nothing in the record of the Soviet Union had prepared us. Before we attempt to analyze the motives and calculations that may explain it, let us first look at the consequences that might at the worst flow from it.

The first of them needs no underlining. The pact that Herr von Ribbentrop signed in Moscow rendered an attack on Poland relatively easy and safe. If Stalin had reserved for himself full freedom of action and stood on guard as an armed neutral, the German General Staff might well have hesitated to attack Poland. For even if that ill armed country could be overrun with relative ease in a few weeks or months, at the end of this operation the German armies in the East, exhausted by their effort and perilously far from their base, would have confronted the fresh forces of a potentially hostile Russia. This pact means that they would now meet friends when they reached the Russo-Polish frontier, and it is even conceivable that some division of the spoils may have been arranged.

From the standpoint of the Western Powers the military consequences are at a first glance exceedingly serious. Germany gains access to vast sources of foods and raw materials. It is no accident that a treaty for the resumption of barter trading between Germany and Russia preceded the pact of friendly neutrality. The oil, grain and minerals of Russia are now at the disposal of a belligerent Germany. By a stroke of the pen the terrors of a British naval blockade have been greatly diminished. Of many luxuries and some necessities, coffee, fats and rubber, for example, Germany could be deprived, but the chief raw materials of victory would be at her service. The Volga and Baltic Sea routes would be open from the start, as would shorter land-roads, if and when Poland was overrun. Moreover, the defection of Russia from the Peace Front made it more than ever probable that Rumania must maintain her cautious neutrality. In that event two oilfields and two wheatfields would be open to the Germans; these no blockading fleet could close.

A further military consequence has to be taken into account. When one surveyed the whole vast field of operations on the hypothesis of a continental war, it seemed that Russia had it in her power to grant or withhold the means for a decisive counter-offensive. What force, in what field, could threaten the Axis with the possibility of a victorious invasion? Soldiers may warn us that neither the Maginot Line nor the more hastily constructed Siegfried Line is literally impregnable. But the latter is doubtless solid enough to make any French attempt to break it tragically costly. What the French would wish to do, if Italy gave them the chance, is doubtless to push through the Alps into the plain of Lombardy. But that tempting operation has become impossible since Italy has adopted at the outset the congenial role of an armed neutral, who will strive to gain her ends rather by blackmail than by arms.

There remained until the other day another possibility. The eastern front is relatively open, undefended either by nature or by any imposing works of art. If the Red Army is in fact as imposing as it is on paper, might not its motorized divisions and its colossal air force, acting in combination with the numerous if ill equipped Poles, invade the Reich and give the signal for a German Revolution? If that possibility ever existed, Stalin has wiped it out. It will be seen, then, that his action, on the eve of the struggle that lies before Europe, transformed the military outlook to the disadvantage of the Western Powers. Why has he done this service to the arch-enemy of yesterday?

The attempt to answer this question carries us back several months to the moment when Litvinov fell. It is true that Litvinov meant more for the outer world than he ever meant to Russians. He was the adroit executant of policies rather than their dynamic author. It was not he who laid down the new line of policy, when the decision was taken to make an alliance with France, to enter the League of Nations and to use the Communist Parties of Europe for the creation of People's Front coalitions to defend political democracy. None the less, he was the executant and personification of this policy. His fall was a signal that Stalin was losing faith in this strategy. It had accumulated an unbroken record of failure. The alliance with France was only a scrap of paper, for it was never completed by military conversations. The League, since Russia joined it, had become an inarticulate ghost. The Popular Front had collapsed in France, and in Spain had suffered a defeat none the less tragic because it was heroic. In England the Labor Party smothered it. Litvinov may have made his gallant idealistic moves, but they never succeeded. When he tried, after the capture

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of Vienna, to rouse the democracies to action by proposing a conference of peace-loving powers to devise means of resistance to further aggression, the British Foreign Office told him that his suggestion was "inopportune." When, after the fall of Prague, he repeated this proposal, he was told that it was "premature." In the interval during the tragedy of Munich, Russia was ignored as if she had been an impotent Balkan State, not only by the British but also by her nominal allies, the French. Stalin had had enough. He dismissed Litvinov and with an open mind faced as alternatives two possible policies in Europe. One was isolation and abstention, the other common action with the Western Powers to veto war in Europe. Either policy must affect the outlook for Russia in the Far East. There lies the main source of error when we Westerners attempt to judge Russia's policy. When we suppose that she is influenced by considerations that bear on our hemisphere, she may in fact be governed by calculations that relate solely to the Far East.

In this mood, inclining to wash his hands altogether of Europe, Stalin found himself courted by both sides. The German approach was discreet and almost silent. It aimed ostensibly at a resumption of trade on a large scale, but in reality at a political rapprochement, a return to the relationship of close coöperation—something more than neutrality and less than alliance—that began in 1922 at Rapallo when Germany and Russia consoled each other as the two pariahs of Europe, was confirmed in 1926 and finally vanished only when Tukachevsky and his fellow generals were executed. The Western approach on the other hand was open and public, for it was imposed on the reluctant Mr. Chamberlain by the pressure of British public opinion and the French soldiers. I have before me, as I write, a diary of the negotiations that dragged along for five months. The British were always slow, lapsing into silence for two or three weeks at a time, and never answering a Russian suggestion in less than four or five days. The Russians would reply within twenty-four hours or less. The governing fact was that Mr. Chamberlain had given his amazingly rash and unilateral guarantee to Poland, Rumania and Greece without consulting Moscow, or assuring himself in advance of its support. The result was that it barely entered the Russian mind as a possibility that these guarantees could be sincere.

With a fatal consistency, Downing Street went on confirming this impression, sometimes by delays, sometimes by snubs. In June the Russians invited Lord Halifax to come to Moscow in person; he sent a junior official, Mr. William Seeds, instead. The deadlock over "indirect aggression" against the Baltic States reflected the suspicions that dominated both sides alike. When the Russians tried to break it by proposing military conversations, a delay of nearly three weeks occurred before the soldiers reached Moscow, and no officer of the first rank was among the British.

The last straw was the discovery that the Poles were still obstinately opposed to the presence on their soil of Russian troops: they wanted munitions and arms but nothing more. In fairness to the Poles it must be noted that they had to face an awkward complication. If Russians in great force used a given area of Polish territory as their base, who would control the local administration? But with good will and tact, as in France during the World War, a workable arrangement can always be devised. Worse still, the Western Powers were content with this attitude of theirs. That was for the Russians decisive. "These people," they argued, "do not really mean to fight. The Poles are probably too weak for any prolonged defense: they are certainly too weak to attempt any counter-offensive unaided."

Stalin now acted as he had for long felt inclined to act. He "liquidated" the whole Western orientation associated with Litvinov and Dimitrov. He jettisoned the entire ideological cargo of collective security. He embraced Germany as a benevolent neutral. His reckoning probably was that Poland would be partitioned and that the Western Powers would not effectively support her. The gain, as he saw it, was that he had broken the rather tenuous ties that bind Japan to the Axis. For a time, at least, he had secured his own western front and might now venture to back China and upset the New Order in the Far East. If he abandoned Europe to the law of the jungle, he could boast that he had weakened the forces of darkness in Asia.

For the rest, he doubtless regarded the Führer's pledges as valid only while they suited his convenience. For his own part, he too was capable of "interpreting" his own promises of neutrality, if they should become inconvenient. In any event, he could still sell arms to the Poles, if he chose, and limit such supplies of oil and wheat as he might sell to the Germans. If it should come, against his expectations, to general war, he might become the arbiter of a continent's destinies. Tukachevsky had always argued that the capitalist powers should be allowed to exhaust themselves in internecine war: at the end of it, the Red Army would promote and protect the inevitable social revolution. Has Stalin picked the brains of the man he shot? It may be so; but that reckoning is distant and uncertain. I feel it hard to believe that the Russian dictator retains his old revolutionary outlook. The immediate attraction of this move to Stalin was, rather, that it gave him a free hand in the Far East, and shattered the anti-Comintern pact.

These events in Moscow will rank among the tragedies of miscalculation. Paradoxically enough, Stalin's withdrawal from the Peace Front has actually stiffened the resistance of the British government. It loathed the idea of fighting with Russia as an ally: irrational though the attitude may seem, it would prefer to fight alone. For it the spectre of Red revolution has receded: it need not now consult Moscow over the eventual settlement. It confidently expects a rally of Japan, of

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Franco's Spain and, indeed, of the whole Catholic and conservative world to its own camp. There is dismay in the ranks of the extreme parties of the European Left, and M. Daladier has even ventured to suppress the Communist newspapers. What the German workers feel over Stalin's desertion one can only conjecture. Europe is a more hopeless continent because of this Muscovite lapse into cynicism. But it is questionable whether in the long run either Stalin or Hitler has gained by it.

London (by air mail) H. N. BRAILSFORD

II: An Inexcusable Treaty

I FIND THE RUSSO-GERMAN non-aggression pact totally indefensible.

All discussions of this startling agreement must begin with one indisputable premise: Moscow knew that the British and French governments had dropped their policy of appeasement. A high Soviet official in western Europe said to me three days before the announcement of Ribbentrop's flight to Moscow: "There will be no second Munich." The Kremlin had received reports to this effect, Voroshilov's talks with the French and British military experts confirmed it and the whole history of the last six months made it abundantly clear to the Bolsheviks.

Munich, in September, 1938, was supposed to direct German expansion eastward. Yet immediately after Munich, Hitler's statements and policy and Nazi propaganda grew increasingly anti-British. Hitler claimed colonies, and Italian Fascists demanded Jibuti, Tunis and Suez. Both were evidence of a western orientation of the Axis. In January, 1939, Holland had reason to feel herself threatened and took defensive measures. The British Foreign Office was alarmed over her fate and intervened in Berlin.

In March, 1939, Hitler occupied Prague. Then he turned against Poland. Had he switched to the East again? What had happened?

We can now piece together the record of events. Hitler expected that Poland would be frightened by his easy absorption of the Czechs and Slovaks, and by the fact that, with the Protectorate over Slovakia, Germany's frontier with Poland was now 200 kilometers longer than it had been. That weakened Poland's strategic position. Hitler assumed that Poland was ripe for diplomatic plucking. The German government accordingly inquired in Warsaw whether Poland would remain neutral if Germany attacked France and England. But as a guarantee that the Poles would indeed stay out, Hitler asked for Danzig and a highway through the Corridor.

The Poles carried this information to London and were immediately—March 31, 1939—granted a British pledge of assistance. For it was obvious that if the West surrendered Poland at another Munich the next step would be an assault on England and France, who would then have to fight anyway but without the cooperation of Poland. Chamberlain, moreover, realized that Hitler did not believe in "self-determination," did not want merely Germans and was simply bent on dominating the world.

When Italy seized Albania in April, 1939, it became still clearer that the Axis aimed to neutralize the East, for between the Italo-German pincers Yugoslavia would be incapable of independent action. The same applied to Rumania. If Poland also betrayed the Anglo-French entente, Germany and Italy could concentrate their efforts on one western and one North African front.

But Poland upset these calculations. Since she rejected Germany's doubtful offer, Hitler decided to make overtures to Moscow. The diplomatic correspondent of The London Times declares that the Italian ambassador in Berlin, employed as Germany's intermediary, approached the Soviet ambassador in Berlin in June, 1939. Another version has it that first contacts were established in May by one-eyed Czech General Sirovy, acting on behalf of the conquering Nazis. The question posed was: Will Russia promise aloofness in case of a German conflict in the West? Out of that question grew the non-aggression pact.

In weighing the Nazi proposal, Stalin had to ask himself: Will it promote peace? Will it produce a Munich over Poland? Will it hasten a war?

Advocates of collective security in Europe have always contended that a bloc among the French and British and the Russians would deter Hitler. Then the non-aggression convention between Moscow and Berlin could only encourage Hitler—especially at a moment when all his armed forces were poised for a smashing coup against Poland. The agreement certainly does not reinforce Poland or France or England. It certainly improves Germany's chances. Then it could not promote peace.

Another Munich? Moscow had been told authoritatively that this was ruled out. Stalin might have thought, however, that France and England, terror-stricken after the defection of Russia, would yield on Poland despite their earlier resolution. Ergo, Moscow was ready to sacrifice Poland or divide Poland with Germany. Moscow, in other words, desired another Munich, this time at the expense of Poland and as the price of peace.

Or, the Bolsheviks, expecting no Munich of any kind, and knowing that their agreement with the Nazis would accelerate a mortal combat between the Italo-Germans and the Anglo-French, signed it for that very reason.

Let us examine another side of the picture which Stalin had to contemplate. If the Kremlin said "No" to Hitler and instead concluded a Peace Front pact

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with France and England, the two possibilities were, first, that Hitler would be stopped by this superior coalition and refrain from war, or, second, that his internal situation and his self-confidence would madly drive him to fight. In the second case, Russia would be committed to join in the war against Hitler and even to bear the brunt of it. That, I think, is exactly what she did not wish to do.

Because of her disappointment over the collapse of Czecho-Slovakia and the loss of Republican Spain, Russia had become strongly isolationist in Europe. That explains the protracted and unsatisfactory character of the Anglo-British pact negotiations. There had never been any great eagerness in Moscow to sign the pact. Moscow, moreover, is supremely interested in the Far East. Today Japan is marching forward and no major power except Russia is in a position or a mood to cope with her. Russia will cope with her. The Russo-German non-aggression agreement unties Moscow's hands in the Far East, leaving the Japanese without European friends.

But Russia could have stayed out of a European war without concluding the non-aggression treaty with Germany. She could have said that in case of a European conflict she proposed to keep hands off. Nobody would have attacked Russia for this and nobody could have attacked her before first crushing Poland—for which England and France were pledged to wage war.

Then why did Moscow sign with Germany? If Stalin thought that Germany had no intention of going to war, why the hurried signature of the document? Was the Kremlin afraid that if it adhered to the Peace Front or even remained neutral without agreeing to ship goods to Germany under the new commercial agreement Hitler would not march? I do not know. But perhaps Moscow saw the advantages of a Western war which would weaken all powers in Europe.

The moral effect of the Russian step is devastating. Such a change of front without notice sows mistrust of all regimes. It is difficult to decide anachronisms in international politics. Ideology? Parties of the Left? These have been dealt a blow from which they cannot quickly recover. If war comes, what peace will they be fighting for? If there is no war because Hitler agrees to a concession, Moscow's blunder is all the more unpardonable. In the current atmosphere, to be sure, anything can happen, and old pacts and very new pacts can go fast into the waste-paper basket. Nothing is settled. Everything is fluid. But no matter what the practical result of that Stalin-Ribbentrop handshake, morally it will haunt us.

Paris (by air mail) LOUIS FISCHER

Inside the German Army

The following document is a private letter from a German army officer to a personal friend now in exile. It was written early in August of this year.

ACCORDING TO MY OPINION the German army cannot be compared with the old imperial army despite its tremendous strength. The boundless devotion of the imperial army to its supreme Commander (the Kaiser) and the profound belief in the justification of the cause one was fighting for, and in the moral integrity of the leadership, do not exist.

Our conscripted army is numerically tremendous. Its equipment is as modern as possible. But only war can decide whether the material is good or bad, whether reserves of ammunition, food and so on are sufficient. This cannot be tested by bloody maneuvers like Italy's Ethiopian campaign or her—and our—experience in Spain. During these tests, our material turned out to be good and efficient—in part at least. But the real test will come when all the armed forces of Europe, and perhaps also of Asia, fight each other. Then all arms must be reproduced in huge quantities, and I am afraid that such a gigantic mass production will influence their quality. The great increase in production of our machine guns has already affected their quality. The construction of the new machine gun which was introduced in 1934 is excellent, but there are many deficiencies, obviously as a result of peculiarities of the material. Experts are convinced that it will not stand the technical strain in case of war.

I am afraid that a gigantic war will break out in the near future. I want to say right from the beginning that I differ in my views from most officers of lower rank, because they are quite optimistic about the chances for Germany to win the next war. I myself, however, like most of my friends (active and retired officers), am rather gloomy. You will know that the recent reshuffle in the Supreme Army Staff had something to do with the skepticism of many officers of higher rank.

The struggle which once existed between the army and the SA has long been decided in favor of the army. But the Party watches closely the appointments of new officers from the point of view of Party interests. I am a soldier of the old school and cannot understand young Nazi officers, who are absolutely cynical and really believe that everything is morally justified provided one is powerful enough. These young officers are inclined to exaggerate the victories we celebrated after the march into Austria and the occupation of Prague. They dream of being so strong that no power in the world can resist them. They seriously believe that our air force and new guns are superior to

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the combined forces of France and Great Britain. Those among us who fought during the World War do not share such optimism. Besides this, we soldiers need more than a belief in the force of physical power. We need the conviction that we have to defend our fatherland, that the war really is inevitable and morally justified. We ought to say this plainly to the Party, but since the recent purges even officers of high rank have become cautious. In these respects, the last purge —after the Munich crisis—had a devastating effect. I am sure that during the next crisis not a single member of the General Staff will dare to speak frankly about our weaknesses in case of war.

It is difficult indeed to say exactly what are the relations between army and state. It is advisable to make a distinction between officers and soldiers. Among officers, you must again differentiate between the pre-war generation (with World War experience) and the younger officers. Among the latter you will certainly find many who are whole-heartedly for the ideas of the new state. As young students they were opposed to the democratic state. They saw only that the leaders of the Weimar Republic had no real self-respect and dignity in foreign policy and that there were many non-Germans in the government. These officers acknowledge Hitler as the man who led them out of servitude. They may know of acts of injustice against some member of their family. But they excuse these as encroachments of local authorities or iron necessities. They forget them with the light-heartedness of youth, especially since they undoubtedly have profited from the Third Reich.

Elderly officers, however, are generally not real Nazis. There are a number of exceptions, not merely because of personal opportunism, but because of a sincere attempt to accept the new ideas. Yet all officers, grumblers and non-grumblers, are quite loyal toward the regime. They have sworn an oath to Hitler. Most of them are convinced that Hitler is a big leader because he succeeded in making Germany again a world power.

About our soldiers: they have a good time in the army and enjoy many more privileges than civilians. Army service is rigid; we demand more from the recruit than in former times, but this does not exceed his physical strength. In compensation, his free time is well organized. Food is good and so is the treatment—although one sometimes hears complaints. The soldier wears a nice uniform, often better than the clothes he wears in civilian life. He is popular with girls, has real prestige and is much more respected than SA and even SS men. He has a chance to be an officer if he can prove that he has the right ideas. What more can he desire? At home he may hear some grumbling. Perhaps a relative is in a concentration camp, or a brother has been killed by the SA, or a sister has been made miserable because she was married to a Jew, or a father has to leave the country illegally because he was a member of the Serious Students of the Bible. But our youth is relatively little affected by these sad experiences. Who will take the risk of being ruined or even merely disturbed in his chances to build up his own economic existence, just for the sake of other people?

All internal adversaries of Hitler—still quite numerous and often good Germans—expect the end of Hitler from war. But I am afraid that this would also mean the end of the army. I myself do not share the optimism or pessimism of certain groups, who make themselves believe that the army might refuse to take orders from Hitler in case of war. The German army from the highest general to the ordinary soldier will march unanimously on the first day of mobilization. Most soldiers will not like to go, after the experiences of the last war, but duty will predominate.

Hitler will have won his gamble if fate of arms is favorable to him during the first three months, if the first battle is a decisive victory and if the whole war is over after a few months. Then the army will become an enthusiastic defender of the National Socialist ideas. But if the first battle is a defeat or even results in a stalemate, then the situation will be quite different. It would be false to believe that the moral strength and will to resistance are stronger among German soldiers today than they were among young soldiers of 1914. The youth of 1914 had such a tremendous enthusiasm that neither pain nor death could affect it. This enthusiasm no longer exists. It has been replaced by the dogma of the invincibility and the godlike mission of Hitler. These ideas about the role of the Führer are not deep-rooted. When the horrors of war and the disappointment of a defeat destroy the blind belief in absolute victory, when the soldier himself suffers and when God Hitler is looked upon as a false God, then the soldier will very quickly be willing to regard the war no longer as a patriotic duty, but merely as an affair of the Nazi Party. Without enthusiasm, however, the young soldier is a worse fighter than the elderly soldier. This was sufficiently proved during the second half of the World War. No soldier will be willing to continue fighting if there is no chance of success. Such a feeling will be intensified by those who are hostile to the Nazis anyhow and who have accumulated bitter feelings or even hatred during many years of silence. Moreover, the unfortunate experience of 1918 has not been forgotten. Then we might experience what some visionaries predict for the day when war breaks out: those who have the arms in their hands will turn them against Hitler and his associates.

At such a moment a leader must arise from our officer corps, some leader who makes use of the historical moment—which will really last only one moment. He must make himself master of the situation. Otherwise the army will perish together with the National Socialist State, and Germany will sink into chaos.

GERMAN OFFICER

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Mr. Arnold Unlocks Housing

BEFORE LONG, it is expected that anti-trust indictments will begin falling on the housing industry like snowflakes in winter. For the last three months in some ten great cities, hard-driving lieutenants of Assistant Attorney General Arnold have been shepherding witnesses into federal grand-jury rooms. The last nervous preparations are being made for a unique episode both in the movement for low-cost housing and in the history of trust-busting.

There is a cogent reason for Mr. Arnold's prospective orgy of indictments. Home-building is an Everglades swamp of tangled sub-industries. Unlike aluminum or automobile manufacturing, no one firm or group of firms is dominant. The estimated 30,000 parts that make up an average house, together with labor and land, come from an uncounted number of large and small concerns. In the past, they have been repeatedly attacked for monopolistic combination. But these attempts have always been made in the despairing knowledge that, if the sewer-pipe ring were smashed, the resulting drop in sewer-pipe prices would be instantly swallowed up by increases by the sand, gravel, concrete, brick, lumber, plaster, insulation, plumbing, heating and hardware men. Mr. Arnold is the first person to conceive of hitting the whole industry at once and everywhere.

Mr. Arnold's forthcoming indictments are only part of the administration's latest efforts to create housing for low-income families. Since 1933, no other problem has so engrossed the New Deal higher-ups. Mr. Roosevelt himself, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Ickes, Mr. Morgenthau, all have tried to cut housing's Gordian knot. Yet at no time has home-building approached the 525,000 annual units that, according to estimates, are needed to prevent our already inadequate housing from deteriorating still further.

Early this year, the problem was tossed to the Temporary National Economic Committee. Soon after, it was decided to move on four battlefronts: first, the TNEC was to hold exhaustive public hearings; second, Mr. Arnold was to institute his anti-trust suits; third, the FHA was to be persuaded to reduce its mortgage rate; fourth, the United States Housing Administration was to be furnished with $800,000,000 in addition to its regular appropriation. Of the last two objectives, the FHA's lending rate has since been lowered, but Congress, in a wild, senseless rage, refused even to discuss the USHA's extra funds.

The hearings on low-cost homes before the TNEC occupied nearly a month. In its able witnesses and the angry frankness with which many of them spoke, no other public discussion of housing has equaled it. Watching it was like watching a stage melodrama in which the actors brandished smoking, double-barreled statistical graphs.

One good reason why Mr. Arnold is the first official to attempt to indict the housing industry is that, before now, the organizational wherewithal did not exist. Mr. Arnold created it. As he is fond of pointing out, in the reputedly great trust-busting days of Roosevelt I, the anti-trust division of the Justice Department numbered exactly eight persons. When Solicitor General Jackson turned the division over to Mr. Arnold, it numbered forty-eight. Mr. Arnold presented himself before Congress, and pleaded the cause of a competitive economy with such fervor that he received funds for two hundred lawyers. At least sixty of them have been working on the housing suits, under a bulky, brilliant young economist, Mr. Corwin Edwards.

The sixty lawyers were sent forth to twenty-six cities, since winnowed down to ten. According to report, many of the grand jurors became inoculated with the low-cost housing virus, and sacrificed their summer vacations to coöperate. Mr. Arnold says that many members of the industry have privately thanked him for threatening to indict it. In a number of cases, the heads of individual companies voluntarily exposed themselves to prosecution to aid the government.

The TNEC hearings tell us what the chief accusations against the industry are likely to be. One witness, Mr. Carleton A. Smith, was a member of a firm that builds and sells homes just outside the Chicago city limits. He and his partner have tried to cut costs by acting as their own real-estate brokers, contractors and salesmen. About a year ago, the building-material dealers in their neighborhood formed an association. Suddenly Mr. Smith found that manufacturers and primary suppliers would no longer sell to him, save for one fearful gravel-pit owner. He was told he must buy thereafter from a "licensed" building-materials yard. By whom the yards were licensed he never found out, but at every yard within trucking distance the prices of sand, gravel, cement, lime, mortar, tile became identical. Brick dealers had their own separate group, and brick was $11 a thousand throughout the Chicago area.

About plaster, or gypsum, Mr. Smith told a slightly more complicated story. In his neighborhood he could not buy gypsum at all, or, if he did, members of the building-trades union would not use it. To have his houses plastered, he must employ, as sub-contractor, a master plasterer, who himself must buy material from an appointed dealer. Electric equipment, plumbing, heating apparatus were similarly restricted. Window glass must be bought from a master glazier, and none of Mr. Smith's workers—all union men employed for long periods—was permitted to set it in window

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sashes. Wistfully Mr. Smith said that, since he purchased seventy-five bathtubs and seventy-five everything else at a time, it seemed unjust that he could not bargain directly with manufacturers. He ought not be forced to pay the same price as the householder who bought one bathtub in a lifetime.

Another witness was Mr. Andrew J. Eakin, of Starrett Brothers and Eakin, builders of the immense Metropolitan Life housing development in the Bronx, New York City. Mr. Eakin beat the plumbers, but only because he had a massive club to brandish under their noses—an order for fixtures for 12,000 bathrooms. He demanded the right to speak directly to his chosen manufacturer, the Kohler company, and ultimately won out. But the Kohler company went through the form of observing sanctified plumbing tradition. Mr. Eakin obtained his 12,000 sets of bathroom fixtures at his negotiated price, but all were billed to him through New York City master plumbers.

General Robert E. Wood, chairman of the board of Sears, Roebuck, testified as the builder of fifty-two homes for employees at Kankakee, Illinois, and as a large dealer in building materials. The Kankakee homes, union built, were sold to Sears, Roebuck workers for $3,100. General Wood wished to build similar homes for Chicago employees. The lowest Chicago bids he received were at $4,800. A bizarre circumstance was that Chicago plumbers, bidding on Sears, Roebuck houses, would not use Sears, Roebuck plumbing. Item by item, General Wood recited differences in costs between Chicago, Kankakee and nearby cities. He took pains, however, to emphasize that monopolistic restraints involving the connivance of union officials exist only in a few great cities, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco. In most towns, as in Kankakee, union leaders were guiltless.

Monopolistic practices such as these presumably will form the substance of Mr. Arnold's prospective anti-trust suits. It seems certain that they exist and have caused "sticky" prices. To what extent can these prices be blamed for the failure of home-building to recover from its depression slump? The economic consultant of the TNEC, Mr. Theodore J. Kreps, presented evidence that showed an altogether suspicious relationship. In 1937, the volume of home building started to expand; many New Dealers then boasted of a coming building boom. But simultaneously there was an abrupt jump in prices. The infant boom faltered, sagged, collapsed. Perhaps more important, Mr. Kreps pointed out that many building-material prices did not fall in the preceding depression. They remained on the 1929 plateau, and their advance in 1937 was made from that departure point. The price of plaster rose to twice that of 1929. Cast-iron soil pipe was 49 percent, sand and brick 10 percent, important kinds of lumber 15 to 25 percent above the 1929 level.

If Mr. Arnold succeeds in obtaining convictions in the building industry, if he brings about a general fall in building costs, what likelihood is there that he will thereby start a fresh building boom? The housing problem has so far been insoluble; is Mr. Arnold possessed of Alexander's sword? A careful answer would perhaps require as many pages as the fat volumes on its home-building hearings that the TNEC will shortly publish. Here it is possible merely to summarize the arguments of administration members who do not agree with Mr. Arnold, and to give his rebuttal.

Washington correspondents for conservative newspapers have gleefully reported that New Dealers disapprove of Mr. Arnold's suits, and want him to drop them. This, of course, is absurd. Mr. Arnold is himself one of the New Deal high command. But it is true that certain of his colleagues give emphasis to other aspects of the housing problem, particularly to the interest rate for mortgage money. The intra-administration fight to persuade the FHA to lower its interest rate, it will be recalled, is only just won. Many New Dealers are convinced that cheap money is the shortest road to low-cost homes. Mr. Kreps voiced their feeling when he said that, if it were possible to force building-trades labor to lower its already insufficient wages by 50 percent, it would not reduce the cost of homes as much as a cut in the interest rate from five to four percent.

Fierce disputes over the cost of mortgage money, especially over the practicability of a four-percent rate, raged continuously in the TNEC hearings. The weight of evidence seemed to be that a solution of the housing problem through cheap money alone was relatively distant—at least as long as the money was to come from timid rich men, and even more timid banks and insurance companies. Well financed corporations and individuals are already finding money at four percent. But to bring cheap money to the small home owner, the government would probably need not merely to insure mortgages through the FHA, but itself become money-lender.

Other New Dealers have hesitated over Mr. Arnold's avowed purpose to attack, if need be, the AFL building-trade unions. These unions dominate the AFL; they are already offended by the failure of the WPA to maintain the prevailing wage-rate; their hostility might be exceedingly dangerous in next year's election.

Mr. Arnold and his assistants have kept a firm silence in the face of criticism. However, if it were permissible for them to speak, I am convinced that they would agree that the wages of building-trades workers, particularly on an annual basis, are miserably low. Moreover, they would agree that, except in a few great cities, union control over residential building has been wantonly exaggerated. Actually, it is of the flabbiest. In many cases, workers are frankly non-union; in others the union leaders wink at sub-standard wage-rates. Finally, they would say that what is important is not the wage paid a worker, but what the worker produces

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in return. The much advertised American way means high wages and high productivity.

The basic justification for the anti-trust suits of the Justice Department is not the possibility of forcing down profits of manufacturers, distributors, contractors, or the wage-rates of labor, but of hacking away the restraints now laid on ambition and inventiveness. One of Mr. Arnold's assistants illustrated this with a simple example. He said that recently a small builder brought to the Department a flexible strip of material resembling a quarter-round—a narrow strip of wood—which, in low-cost houses, is usually nailed around the edge of rooms to conceal cracks between wall and floor. The builder's strip, however, was of rubber and contained electric-light wire. At regular intervals, electric base-plugs could be attached to it. As most householders know to their sorrow, electrical contractors charge from two dollars up to six dollars—in Washington, D. C.—to install an outlet. The builder explained that, with his device, he could install them for twenty cents. But union regulations and city building ordinances forbade its use.

The Department official scented quarry. Hastily the builder explained the union officials were good fellows, so were municipal building authorities. He had no doubt that, with persistence, he could obtain permission from both to use his device. But he could not afford to lobby union and municipal officials in a half-dozen localities. In the same amount of time he could build, or half-build, a house that he could sell. So he meant to use the traditional, expensive electric outlet. True, the savings from the new device would be at least 90 percent, but in the building industry 90 percent often was too trifling to bother with.

Before the TNEC, Mr. Robert L. Davison, director of housing research of the John B. Pierce Foundation, testified to the lavish potentialities in the housing industry. He told of Professor J. D. Burnell, a crystallographer at Cambridge, England, who undertook to devise an ideal atomic structure for exterior walls. Later, from bamboo, he fabricated a material nearly identical with his mathematical *tour de force*. In Mr. Davison's words: "It was a third of the weight of cork, three times the compressive strength of cork, chemically inert, inorganic and non-inflammable, and if you built a wall of that material, you would have almost perfect insulation, and it would weigh one pound per square foot of wall. That sounds fantastic, but it isn't half so fantastic as the radio. . . ."

Mr. Davison produced before the TNEC five materials already made experimentally by the big building-material manufacturers, and all incomparably superior to anything purchasable in the market. With research and experimentation, preferably backed by the federal government, he predicted housing at $500 a room within a relatively brief interval. If social gain comes from Mr. Arnold's anti-trust suits, it will be chiefly because —in his own words—"they will permit development over a broad area of experiments in mass production of housing."

JONATHAN MITCHELL

Blueprints for a New Society

II: *The Dream of Anarchism*

BERTRAND RUSSELL, in his "Proposed Roads to Freedom," finds good anarchist doctrine in the words of Chuang Tzu, a Chinese mystic philosopher of 300 B. C. who believed in abolishing all forcible constraint of the individual by the community. Probably Chuang Tzu's anti-statism was old even in its time; indeed, anthropologist J. Leslie Mitchell would have us think that anarchism dates back to Old Stone Age times—to that "long spring of the human race" when man recognized "no rule, no authority, no chief, no council of elders, no law, no sexual problems, no wives, no husbands, no gods, no devils, no science, no war, few irrational hopes and possibly fewer irrational fears." Modern anarchism, however, has a less happy genealogy. It is true that it looks back for its psychological warrant beyond the "struggle for existence" to a pre-historical period in which mankind was less a creature of tooth and claw than he was a devotee of mutual aid. But modern anarchism, which combines its fear of the state with a somewhat incongruous belief in community ownership of land and productive equipment, is, like modern socialism, an offspring of the industrial revolution. As such, it can only be understood by setting it against the background of European history of the nineteenth century.

Specifically, one must go to French nineteenth-century history if one is to appreciate the forces that generated and amplified modern anarchist doctrine. In contrast with British nineteenth-century history, with its long upward glide from Chartist hunger to Victorian richness and complacency, French nineteenth-century history prior to 1871 consisted of spasmodic alternations of semi-dictatorial regimes and sudden, fierce popular uprisings that seemed to lead nowhere in particular. The intellectual reflex of such a state of affairs prolonged through three agonized generations was a straw-grasping Utopianism as to political ends, and a belief in violence as the only valid political means. French literature of Orleanist times—1830-48 —abounded in the sort of thing which Edward Bel-

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lamy has made familiar to Americans in his "Looking Backward," a romance of the almost-perfect state. This, in itself, was harmless enough; but with such tantalizing dreams held before their eyes other Frenchmen—August Blanqui, the Babouvists—were in a perpetual insurrectionary hurry to topple the government.

Neither the Utopians nor the Blanquists were anarchists. Yet the society that spawned them was spiritually hungry for a freedom that is commonly denied by most governments, even including the democratic. Somewhat apart from the Utopian readers of Etienne Cabet's "Voyage en Icarie," and quite, quite far distant from the insurrectionists, there stood the followers of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, the theorist of "mutualism." Proudhon has been called the "father of anarchism." He believed in the free association of individuals in economic communes; and he spent a decade of exile protesting against the dictatorship of the upstart Louis Napoleon. Yet, as Max Nomad has pointed out, he was a peculiar anarchist in that he believed in abiding by the law. The Proudhonian mutualists considered man a moral, rather than an economic, creature; and Proudhon himself set pure anarchism down as a distant goal to be achieved when mankind was morally ready for it. Meanwhile, what he hoped for in the present was a growth of mutual-credit societies and coöperative industries, all federated in a loose check-and-balance state that would permit more freedom than France had known since the collapse of the hopes of her great revolution.

Into Orleanist France there strayed the real father of modern anarchism, the Russian Michael Bakunin. Bakunin came from an old aristocratic family: his father "owned" 3,000 serfs; his great uncle on his mother's side was General Muraviev, the notorious "hangman of Warsaw" who had broken the Polish revolution. At the age of fourteen Bakunin was sent to the Artillery School in St. Petersburg; his father, who had changed his mind about liberalism after the failure of the Dekabrist conspiracy of 1825, was bent on rearing his children as loyal subjects of the Tsar. After his graduation into the Tsar's officer corps, the young Michael spent two years with his regiment in Minsk province, where he witnessed the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1830. That spectacle gave him his bellyful of authority; accordingly, he quit the army to study philosophy in Moscow, in St. Petersburg and on his father's estate in Tver.

It was a moral objection to coercion, not any theory of economic development or historical change, that brought Bakunin through his stage of "Hegelian fever" to anarchism. He was, however, a long time on the way to mature formulation of his beliefs. After leaving Russia he spent some time in Germany, which was then seething with rebellion. Contact with the spirit of 1848 made him into a revolutionist in a vague sort of way. When the Saxon police became interested in his first famous revolutionary apothegm, "The zeal for destruction is at the same time a creative zeal," he moved on to Switzerland, and then to Paris. It was here, on the eve of the *coup d'état* that was to unseat Louis Philippe, that Bakunin met Marx and Proudhon, whose respective philosophies he used as quarrying grounds for the doctrine that came to be known as anarchist communism. Indeed, modern anarchism might be expressed in a formula coming straight from the Paris of 1848: Marxian class struggle, plus Proudhonian mutualism and anti-statism, plus a trust in the Blanquist insurrectionary deed, equals the anarchism of Bakunin.

In later years, after the suppression of the hopes of 1848 all over Europe, Bakunin quarreled bitterly with Marx. The quarrel was partly temperamental; but it was also (though disciples of both men will deny it) a question of patriotism. Bakunin hated German rigidity and order; he therefore distrusted Marxian socialism, which put its emphasis on the conquest of state power. Marx disliked Slavic dreaminess; he therefore read nonsense into Bakunin's theories. As early as 1848 Marx's paper, the Neue Rheinische Zeitung, spread the libel that Bakunin was a Russian secret agent. The libel was later retracted; in any event it would have seemed silly in the light of Bakunin's subsequent prison sentence and exile at the hands of the Tsar. But the enmity between Marx and Bakunin persisted through a lifetime of jockeying for the control of the revolutionary labor movement.

Never a precise doctrine, anarchism evolved in several directions after Bakunin's death in 1876. At one extreme were the anarchists who believed in the *attentat*, the propaganda of the deed: these included Johann Most, who put his trust in a slug of dynamite in a piece of lead pipe; Alexander Berkman, who tried to kill Henry Clay Frick; and possibly Leon Czolgocz, the assassin of McKinley. These were sincere, if deluded, men, as the autobiography of Emma Goldman proves by abundant testimony. Their terroristic doctrines shaded into the individualist anarchism of the people whom Max Nomad has called "crooks with a philosophy"—criminals who used anarchism as an ideological cloak for thievery and murder. At the other extreme there was the gentle philosophical anarchism of Benjamin Tucker, who died just the other day in Monaco. Neither the anarchists of the deed nor the anarchists of the philosophical ivory tower, however, constituted the real strength of the movement after Bakunin's death. That real strength was to be found in the Italy of Errico Malatesta and the Spain of the martyred Ferrer, where the doctrine called anarcho-syndicalism made great headway in the trade-union movement. It was to be found in the United States of the IWW upsurge. And, above all, it was to be found in the ranks of the advanced trade unionists

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of France, whose doctrines of revolutionary syndicalism made good people tremble before the World War.

Syndicalism has been called the "anarchism of the market place." Like anarchist communism, it was a response to specifically French conditions; indeed, its name derives from the French word for trade union, which is *syndicat*. In England and Germany, the growth of the trade-union movement coincided with the growth of social-democratic and laborist politics. In France, however, the labor movement could make no use of political action; it found itself crushed to earth with every political upheaval from 1791, when it was actually suppressed in the name of the great French Revolution, to 1871, when the bloody defeat of the Paris Commune was synonymous with the defeat of all labor. Even after the birth of the Third Republic, French trade unionism had to wait some thirteen years before the liberal ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau got around to legalizing it in 1884. With a century of defeat behind it, French labor regarded parliamentary action with an unmitigated cynicism that was pardonable in the circumstances.

If socialism had been able to get a strong foothold in late nineteenth-century France, it might have pulled the trade-union movement along with it into politics. But French workers distrusted the socialists as much as they distrusted the possibilities of political action. The reason for this distrust derived from the sectarian nature of French socialism, which revived under the Third Republic only to split itself four ways among the Marxian followers of Jules Guesde, the possibilists of Paul Brousse, the Allemanists, and the independent socialists led by Jean Jaurès, Millerand, Viviani and Briand. And when Millerand, Viviani and Briand all deserted socialism for political careerism in the Center and on the Right, the distrust of the French trade unionists was compounded.

Whether the slogan "no politics" amounts to anarchist politics is a question one might well refer to the Sphinx. Certain it is that Fernand Pelloutier, an anarchist communist, was the father of revolutionary syndicalism and the creator of the Fédération des Bourses du Travail, which coalesced with the Confédération Générale du Travail in 1902. Dominant in Pelloutier's "anarchist politics" was the idea of the general strike, the "strike with folded arms," which, in Sorelian terms, was the great energizing "myth" of pre-war labor in France. Local strikes, in the anarchist politics of the syndicalist movement, were the marketplace substitute for the old-time anarchist propaganda of the deed; the general strike was the equivalent of the Marxian revolution and was to result in the autonomy of the trade unions in free association with each other.

Inasmuch as pre-war France was still a country of small industry, syndicalist organization developed as a curious mixture of regionalism and national industrial unionism. Regionally, each single, separate *syndicat* was identified with a *bourse du travail*—a local chamber of labor that functioned for job-seekers and jobholders very much as the chamber of commerce does for business men. But each single, separate *syndicat* was also identified with national labor in its particular field through representation in the Confédération Générale du Travail. The CGT, after its merger with the stronger Fédération des Bourses, became sort of a parliament of labor, with representatives from the local bourses sitting on one side of the House, and representatives of national unions, both craft and industrial, sitting on the other. An Executive Committee of the Whole was formed by joint session of the two branches. The theory behind the two groupings was that each would tend to correct the other's point of view. As a matter of history, French labor localism was doomed to lose out in the post-war years; the idea of regional autonomy for labor was compelled to make its last stand in Spain, an industrially laggard country inhabited by the fiercest individualists in the modern world.

Since it is a negation of organization, anarchism has never produced a body of theory comparable to that of Marxism: one can't write formal tomes about nebulous feelings. Bakunin's ideas are vague on the positive side; and Sorel's are hardly constructive. The nearest thing to an anarchist theoretician is Peter Kropotkin, the Russian prince who dreamed a noble dream of factory work carried on in pleasant conjunction with mental labor and labor in the fields. An enemy of the international capitalism of Richard Cobden and John Bright, Kropotkin correctly foresaw that the "perfect" world division of labor would not survive the extensive export of capital goods and the costs of ocean-borne cross-hauling of products that might just as well be produced at home. But Kropotkin carried his animus against a division of labor to fantastic extremes: he wanted every intellectual and professional to do some farming or factory work (a fine thing for writers, but a waste of a good surgeon's time), and he wished peasants to spend at least a few hours daily at the lathe or the work-bench.

Reading Kropotkin's "Fields, Factories and Workshops," one gets a sense of a curious mixture of medieval reversionism, William Morris estheticism and high common sense. Long before the formal invention of "agrobiology," long before Stuart Chase started writing about "tray agriculture," Kropotkin found practising chemurgists in the market gardeners of the Paris suburbs. These gardeners, he noted, practically created their own soil; indeed, they fertilized to such an extent that they could afford to sell an inch or so of topsoil every year. From this observation it was just a step to the conclusion that "nations can live at home" —or that individuals, given a plot of earth, can live anarchistically provided the tax collector is lenient.

Most of Kropotkin's examples of happy peasants

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who combined farming with shop work, however, were drawn from backward regions of France, Germany, Switzerland and Russia: Kropotkin's view did not comprehend the world of streamlined trains, continuous strip-mills, four-lane highways and mass-production assembly lines. Not that a union of agriculture and assembly-belt work is fantastic; Henry Ford, in his own paternalistic and most un-Kropotkinian way, has demonstrated that. But industrial development in a world of nationalist states, which creates great *de facto* power-units, renders the anarcho-syndicalism of one country the natural prey of the state capitalism of other countries. Anarchists bemoan this as a fact; but few of them are clear-sighted enough to admit that the anarchist creed has no chance on a continent or in a world that is cut up into squabbling nationalist strips.

Bakunin correctly foresaw the future when he labeled Bismarckian Germany the prime enemy of the anarchist movement. For when Bismarck took the petty German principalities and fused them into a powerful nation under the leadership of Prussia, he put the centralized state squarely at the service of the industrial revolution on the whole European continent. Thus, by one of those syncopated historical movements that make the neo-Marxian "law of uneven and combined development" a very real thing, anarchism and syndicalism were put on the defensive from a *national* as well as a class standpoint—a nasty paradox which no good anarchist has ever been able to surmount.

The hopelessness of the anarcho-syndicalist cause in a nationalist world was finally demonstrated by Spain. Had the Germans and the Italians kept their murderous paws off the Spanish peninsula, the anarcho-syndicalists, who were more numerous and certainly more indigenous than the Spanish communists, might conceivably have turned the Spanish civil war into a victory for the libertarian philosophy; at the very least they might have been able to go on living as part of the trade-union movement of a republican Spain. But, with Italian troops and German *matériel* against them, the soldiers of the Spanish Republic were compelled to accept a discipline that is incompatible with anarchism. Had the Republic won the war, anarchist ideas would have been partially discredited, though individual anarchists would have been honored for a courage that impelled some of them to fight against the Fascists with quite literal bare hands. But, the war being lost, it will be a long time before anarchism in Spain lifts its head to receive a tribute to courage or ideology.

Spanish anarchists did, indeed, succeed in running factories and farms as "free communes" in the midst of war. But, if they proved their point that group "ownership" of the means of production is possible, they also proved by their inability to key their productive efforts up to wartime pitch that Proudhonian mutualism is not for a world at war.

Even from the purely internal standpoint, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism present a half-finished picture. Fearing power, anarchists think of the "revolution" as the day on which economic "rights" will be assumed by the trade unions; they believe in the control of the economic processes by the producers. But anarchist economics is a defective science, for it ignores the plain fact that many economic activities are interstitial, a matter of relations between primary and secondary producers, or between producers and consumers. When the syndicates seized the factories in Italy in 1920, they kept them going until they suddenly discovered that raw materials were necessary at one end of a process, and salesmen at the other. The organization of production does not necessarily require a government, as the Swiss Family Robinson discovered. But the organization of exchange demands some parametric device—say, a money system or a national accounting system—and this presupposes a state to create and enforce the common acceptance of the money or accounting medium. Anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists have never come to grips with the interstitial requirements of round-about production; and one book, Veblen's "Theory of Business Enterprise," is sufficient to blow a hundred years of anarchist thinking sky-high. Moreover, even if interstitial economics were not important, anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism propose on the day of revolution to leave power kicking about in the streets, a huge and wildly threshing live wire. The power is there for any courageous—or even yellow-bellied—condottiere with a pair of rubber gloves to seize, as Mussolini proved in post-war Italy.

It will not do, however, to close a discussion of anarchism on a note of belittlement. For what is valid in anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism has been taken taken over or discovered independently by other movements—by the CIO, for instance, or by the coöperative movement. The industrial unionism preached by John L. Lewis is a syndicalist idea; and when the Swedish consumer coöperatives, for example, went in for manufacturing their own electric-light bulbs they were taking a leaf out of Proudhon and practising "mutualism." Again, the "vagabond wage" which some anarchists have proposed is gaining the status of a "right" even under capitalism: few governments permit the unemployed to starve outright, and just the other day it was seriously proposed in Russia that bread be made a public commodity, like water. Finally, the curious mixed regional-industrial organization of French syndicalism contained the germ of the promising British Guild Socialist movement, which we shall discuss in the next instalment. JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

This is the second in a series of articles by Mr. Chamberlain. The third will appear in an early issue. —THE EDITORS

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Washington Notes

Tenting Tonight

WITH THE ARRIVAL of the long awaited general European war, it has become inevitable that the Neutrality Act will be loosened up in accordance with Mr. Roosevelt's wishes. In the special session of Congress that impends, most observers think that the changes asked for last spring by Mr. Roosevelt will be easily approved, although perhaps not without a sharp fight in the Senate. It seems certain that the administration will have Republican support. As far back as last January, the Republicans in Congress appointed a steering committee on foreign policy of which Mr. Wadsworth, New York's best known gentleman farmer, was chairman. The committee was then, and supposedly still is, in favor of the repeal of all neutrality legislation.

In the last session, Republican opposition to the changes desired by Mr. Roosevelt—the Pittman-Bloom bill—was an illusion, or, more accurately, a species of parliamentary horseplay. A Republican newcomer, Representative Vorys of Ohio, put forward what the party leadership considered a freak proposal, but one dear to the hearts of certain church groups. Under it, the administration could authorize the export of munitions at will, except for "lethal weapons." Mr. Vorys explained that this curious addition to neutrality nomenclature meant simply rifles, artillery, cartridges and shells. Since this country has no equipment for manufacturing these "lethal weapons" in quantity, and could not assemble such equipment for perhaps a year, the practical effect of Mr. Vorys' plan would have been slight. It specifically would not have prevented the export of military airplanes, about which the administration was chiefly concerned.

The House Republicans permitted the Vorys proposal to go to a vote in the spirit of half-grown boys playing hot-foot, their intended butt being Mr. Sam Rayburn, the Democratic leader. To their surprise, according to report, it won by a margin of two votes, 199 to 197. Delightedly they then found that they had ignited a much more important victim, Mr. Roosevelt himself. For the majority of Republicans in the last session, anything with the power to make Mr. Roosevelt angry was thereby desirable, noble, just. Overnight the neutrality debate degenerated to a schoolyard squabble. In the Senate, Mr. Roosevelt was defeated.

According to word reaching Washington, the present crisis has not altered the convictions of the Senate group that drafted and forced to enactment the original neutrality act, Messrs. Nye, Clark, Bone, Borah, Johnson and La Follette. They can be counted on to make a last-ditch struggle, but, rightly or wrongly, few observers think they can stop an administration victory.

The reasons that have brought the Republican Party to support Mr. Roosevelt's foreign policy seem to be thoroughly depressing. It is worth pointing out that henceforth the effect of a vote changing—or repealing—the existing Neutrality Law will be far greater psychologically than that of a vote last spring. The issue then was partly imaginary, and in any case seemingly remote. For the future, a vote inescapably will be on whether we shall enter a foreign war or stay at home. Even the most frivolous Congressman during the last few days has become convinced of the awful realities of Europe. What is it, then, that has moved Republicans to regard a vote on neutrality with apparent cheerfulness? The chief reason has been the financial pages of the big-city newspapers, minimizing the first shock of the outbreak of war and rapturously calculating the profits that will follow. There has been a universal chant of three-dollar wheat and a 300-percent rise in common stocks, and this music has been carried to the politicians by the heavy party contributors. The sincerity of Mr. Roosevelt's wish to help England and France must be accepted, but it is the influence of prospective profiteers that will put his program through Congress.

In last week's Notes I spoke of the forehanded plans of a group of Pennsylvania Republicans, allied to the du Pont family, to deadlock next year's national convention, and of their use of Mr. Justice Roberts as a stalking horse. New Deal strategists now say that they have reliable reports that Mr. Roberts has privately, but forcefully, repudiated this newspaper presidential boom, and will do nothing to aid his former Republican associates in Philadelphia.

Apparently chief credit must go to Ambassador Kennedy for the administration's changed plans for rescuing American tourists stranded in Europe by war. During the Czecho-Slovakian crisis a year ago, administration officials abruptly realized that several thousand Americans, some children of school age, might be unable to obtain ships for home, and would be exposed to lightning air raids. The officials were aware of the fate of children in Madrid and other Spanish cities; the prospect that a similar fate might overtake American children horrified them. If other shipping were unavailable, New Dealers then talked of sending the navy's new, extremely fast light cruisers into the English Channel to evacuate children and their mothers. The appalling danger of ordering a United States warship into a battle zone where, deliberately or otherwise, it might be attacked, is entirely obvious. During the present crisis—under Mr. Kennedy's pushing—American diplomatic officers have made arrangements by which American tourists can be sent to previously chosen rural towns in England and France, as remote as possible from military objectives. There they can remain in relative safety until plans can be devised for their evacuation to America. The "Athenia" case shows the wisdom of such a plan.

On his return to New York from his well photographed holiday at Owosso, Michigan, varied by a delegate-hunting stop-over in Chicago, District Attorney Dewey was accompanied by the aging and practical-minded Mr. Roy O. West, once Mr. Hoover's Secretary of the Interior and patronage distributor. Mr. West provides visible proof of the often reported link between Messrs. Hoover and Dewey. Another Dewey fellow traveler was Lieutenant General Robert Lee Bullard, for the last ten years head of the National Security League. Admittedly a political hitch-hiker like Mr. Dewey cannot be over-fastidious about those he

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rides with; nevertheless, these are strange figures from the past. Meantime, Attorney General Murphy is hatching young federal prosecutors like Mr. Cahill in New York, Mr. Campbell in Chicago and Mr. Rogge, temporarily, in New Orleans, who give promise of matching Dewey in all qualities but self-importance.

Washington T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Building Coming Down

IF THERE IS ANYONE LEFT who doesn't know why building does not revive in this country, here are a few facts which should help him out of his fog. First, by way of prologue, let us drop a comment on the oft repeated astonishment of many at the failure of building to move now as compared with the depression immediately following the War. While everything collapsed then, building construction, after a brief pause, plunged ahead to a boom—and a very bad one.

In 1919 and 1920 we were on a very much higher price plane for everything as compared with the pre-war period. There were, therefore, millions of buildings in America which had been built at the old low prices before the War, and which were now drawing rents based on the high prices after the War. Hence a real-estate investment was just about the juiciest thing in the world. In 1920 and 1921 prices began to decline. But prices never did get to the pre-war level. Moreover, building had been suspended during the War and there was a great scarcity of accommodations with a resulting upward lift of rents. Rents went higher than other prices. There was, therefore, a strong incentive to invest as soon as restrictions like those of material-men, sub-contractors and labor rackets were removed or suspended.

But now we have the reverse of this. We have millions of buildings which were built in the years of the post-war boom at the highest of high prices. And now we have a period of lower prices. Wages being lower, profits smaller and unemployment great (reducing the demand for space), practically no one who has money invested in real estate is making any profit. Whereas the high profits beckoned capital into real-estate investment after the War, the large losses now scare it away.

To add to the difficulty, prices of building almost alone have risen. This fantastic fact excludes any revival in building. And without a revival in building there will be no recovery.

This has other serious implications. But first let me give a few facts on the unprofitableness of real-estate investment. In New York City a survey has just been made by the Real Estate Board of 625 large buildings. They included loft, apartment and office buildings. These buildings, after deducting taxes, costs of upkeep and depreciation and operation, showed a return of something over three percent on their assessed value. The assessed value, we may safely assume, was a good deal less than the actual investment. It must be very plain that any of these buildings with mortgages, after paying the interest, would have nothing left for profit. In the case of 117 of these buildings the profit, based on the assessed value, was .86 percent.

I am sure this fact will bring a chuckle of delight to those who dislike landlords—and no one has less love for landlords than I have. But I hope I am not so naïve as to suppose that anybody will build an apartment or office building in order to get a return of less than one percent. Even a philanthropist would steer clear of that.

In Chicago I venture to say the situation is even worse than it is in New York, which accounts for the fact that there has been even less building in Chicago. This is the capitalist system. People do not put up buildings save for profit. There is no profit in building. Therefore, there is going to be no building.

One of the other implications of this is as follows: Most of our cities are in trouble with their budgets. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find the money for the operation and support of relief. The cities have no important source of revenue save real-estate taxes, though they can, of course, get some money from sales taxes and licenses.

Up to now the cities have struggled to maintain the old 1929 assessments. That has been inescapable. The only other alternative was to lower the assessments and raise the tax rate. For some reason people are not nearly so sensitive to assessments as they are to tax rates. But these assessments cannot be maintained much longer. It is not humanly possible to go on assessing at $100,000 a building which does not pay an adequate return on $50,000, and which the owner would gladly sell for that price. Sooner or later there is going to be a tumbling of real-estate assessments and a crisis in the financial affairs of a good many cities.

There is only one way out. It is not the ideal solution, but under our crazy system it is the only one. We must have more buildings, newer buildings, development of cities to provide newer and fresher tax bases. The other alternative is a general cracking up of the wage scales of the cities for teachers and city employees, and a diminution of city services—all of which would be a calamity.

For this reason, if for no other, the revival of investment in real estate, in new homes, new apartments, new office buildings, new stores and plants is the imperative element in recovery. And this means that the government, the cities, labor and producers must tackle the problem of building construction, for it is there that the chief jam may be found.

The costs of building must come down. The administration of cities and the impact of city taxes on building construction must be mitigated. This is a problem for the city itself to study. The cost of labor must be reduced. It is a waste of good words for people to talk about labor costs making up only 25 percent of building construction costs, and being therefore unimportant. That is not so. This is a job for the unions. The rest is a job for the Attorney General.

JOHN T. FLYNN

Because Heywood Broun is still on vacation, his column is omitted this week.—THE EDITORS

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The Bandwagon

In the old New Deal days plans were developed swiftly that were more or less obviously cockeyed, would not work and could be expected to break down in a year or so. The schemes that are coming out now are equally radical (at least in the sense that they are revolutionary new) but they bear the disturbing added prospect of being feasible. – *From Paul Mallon's Washington column in The Boston Herald.*

It would be a calamity for the United States if everyone would become satisfied with a cheap living and if no one took a chance any more for a whirl at the great industrial profits that have made this nation a land of new millionaires. It would be much better to reduce wages to $1 a day and allow savings to be used in speculation. – *From The Denver Mining Record.*

After all, a capitalist is merely a laborer by another name. – *From a speech by Mr. H. C. Merritt, operator of the big Tagus Ranch in Tulare County, California, at a Pro-America Luncheon reported in The San Francisco Chronicle.*

It's an Ill Wind

The Dies Committee and one or two other interim congressional investigating boards will also be with us this summer. Together their members ought to make a considerable increase in the attendance at the San Francisco Exposition. – *From an editorial in The Los Angeles Times.*

And Grab-Bags Under the Eyes

Associates of Hitler said his face is always serious these days, but that his entire attitude is one of claim. – *A United Press dispatch printed in The New York World-Telegram.*

Keep-It-Clean Department

Business men are taking their wives with them, or both men and women are traveling for professional or business reasons. I mean in general, of course. – *From an interview with a travel company by Diana Rice in The New York Times.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

The Russo-German Pact

SIR: I was disappointed in your editorial "Stalin's Munich" (August 23). It is now clear that the USSR did not desert Poland. How could it? It was never allowed into the Chamberlain "peace front." Poland publicly refused to permit Soviet soldiers upon her soil. And there is nothing in the Soviet-German pact which prevents the sending of supplies to the defense of a third power against aggression—if that power wants to buy. It therefore seems to me an unfair slur upon the integrity of the Soviet Union to say that the policy of collective security was "slain" by the USSR. It is nearer the truth to say that it was torpedoed once more by the Chamberlain group. . . .

The Soviet-German pact has effectively exploded the anti-Comintern front, with violent repercussions already in Rome, Burgos and Tokyo. The USSR has strengthened the peace, temporarily at least, on its western border to lend a stronger hand to China—to the painful discomfiture of the Japanese militarists; it will supply the German people with raw materials, while it leaves Nazi diplomacy holding a rather empty bag.

DANIEL HIESTER KRUPP

New York City

SIR: You say that Russia has lost moral prestige as a result of the recently signed Russo-German pact. Lost moral prestige among whom? And why?

The answer seems to be that she has lost prestige among those people with whom she had very little to begin with—people who either have hated her all along, or have been unsympathetic with the experiment. . . . It seems to me that the Russian position should be judged on the basis of the correctness of tactic in the situation and not on the fact that the announcement caught some people unprepared for it. If not, then the serious business of conducting a government through the present peril of Europe is made unduly amenable to the confining abstractions of the armchair. . . .

MARC MORELAND

New York City

SIR: It looks to an old reader as if you went off the deep end in your blast on the Soviet-Nazi non-aggression pact. The basis of your deliberations should have been Prime Minister Chamberlain's original intention—to set Germany in motion against the Soviet Union. Once you have that fact fixed in mind, the rest is easy. . . . The pact has made the first breach in the "axis" by detaching Japan, for obvious reasons. The Soviets can now deal more freely with Japan, give more effective aid to China and help stabilize the situation in the Far East. It also weakens Hitler in Germany for it reveals to the German people the inconsistency of the Nazi policy. . . .

Finally, there are many who believe that the security of the Soviet Union is of some value to the future of our civilization.

HARRY MARSH

Brooklyn, N. Y.

SIR: I was astonished to read in The New Republic a confirmation of the report that the Soviet Union has entered upon a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany. How can you believe such a thing? That our glorious Leader, Josef Stalin, should enter upon an agreement with Hitler—the whole thing is palpably fantastic. . . .

My own explanation of the affair is simple: It is all a monstrous lie originating in the so-called brain of Leon Trotsky. . . . He and his two stooges, Neville Chamberlain and General

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Krivitsky, have concocted a glaring scandal to the effect that such an agreement actually has taken place; and they have sold their "information" to the capitalist press for the sum, I believe, of $85,000,000.

New York City FRANK TAMLOCK

[*These excerpts are representative of the many letters we have received on the subject.* – THE EDITORS]

French Concentration Camp

SIR: The fascization of France is particularly noticeable in the Ministry of Interior and the other civil authorities that handle foreigners. One of the best examples is the way the remnants of the Spanish Republican army have been treated. All the ex-Republican soldiers who were in and around Paris trying to make arrangements to go to some country were arrested and sent down to concentration camps in the Pyrenees district. Some of these men, arrested like criminals, had valid passports from their mother countries and were waiting in Paris for visas. They were *en règle* with the French police.

These policies are deliberate attempts of the Rightists from Sarraut down, to punish the Left, and make them like it. Often they have nothing to do with freeing France from public charges, of which it has more than enough already. For instance, the writer knows one ex-officer of the Republican army who is an invalid. As in other similar cases the Soviet Union gave him a visa to go to Moscow. (Like all the Poles, Germans, Italians, Czechs and many of the Balkans, he cannot return to the country of his birth.) The French, however, do not give him permission to leave this country. . . .

There was a great deal of scandal about the conditions in the camps themselves, as a result of which things have been somewhat improved. The men now have straw mattresses, wooden barracks, blankets and a few other necessities. The food is still bad, but much better than it was at first when some meals could only be described as mass poisonings. The prisoners are divided in blocks according to nationality, these blocks being isolated from one another by barbed-wire entanglements. Committees of each nationality group decide questions of inter-camp import and organize cultural activities. The writer has before him several numbers of the little camp paper put out weekly by the Polish group and circulated among all those in the Gurs camp who understand that language. Educational activities are in full swing. In one barrack there are courses going on in English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Mathematics, Dialectic Materialism and Leninism. The teachers are, naturally, prisoners, as are the organizers of the courses. . . .

These men, who fought for democracy, are apparently going to be left in their barbed-wire prison camp to study Leninism until they die of scurvy, or until the French authorities find some use for them as cannon-fodder—unless public denunciation of this blot on France forces Sarraut and his underlings to release them and give them a chance to work and live like human beings.

Paris, France JOHN STEVENS

Flashback

SIR: I just happened to run across the article "Picking up the Pieces" from your issue of October 19, 1938. The enclosed clipping is from that article, which was written by Bruce Bliven.

Chicago, Ill. SEYMOUR CAIN

[ENCLOSURE]

Germany and Russia. – The Rosenberg plan, long popular in Berlin, provided for a joint German-Polish attack upon the Soviet Union. If it were successful, Germany would get the Corridor and Poland, in return, would get a large part of the Ukraine, with access to the Black Sea to console her for the loss of Danzig. But there is reason to believe that Hitler may have altered the details of the Rosenberg plan. If he can win a victory over Soviet Russia with the help of Poland, he can probably win without Poland's aid. Why should Poland exist at all? Is it not, in his eyes, an obnoxious post-war invention like Czecho-Slovakia? In any case, he has two possible alternative policies toward Soviet Russia, and only two, Nazi ideology being what it is. Under the first, he will make war as soon as he has consolidated his gains in the Danube Valley, expecting to win and to get the Ukraine as his reward. Under the second, he can make friends with Soviet Russia, and participate in a new and probably bloodless partitioning of Poland. You may argue that after Hitler has built his whole philosophy on the hatred of Bolshevism, he could not now make friends with Moscow; but if you argue thus, you do not understand the utter lack of logic in German thought today, or the complete regimentation of the public mind by the State. Such an arrangement could be sold to the people as a mere economic compact, buttressed by mutual promises to refrain from hostile propaganda. Germany and Russia were friends for a long time, after the Versailles system had been set up. They form a logical economic unit, with Germany's heavy industry and Russia's vast agrarian resources.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

W. C. Poland of Ocean Beach, California, asks us why we have been silent concerning the coming special election in that state set for November 7. The voting will be on the Retirement Life Payment Act, a proposed amendment to the state constitution popularly known as "Thirty Dollars Every Thursday." It provides that voters over fifty years of age shall receive—on condition that they retire from their jobs—thirty dollars weekly in state warrants for the rest of their lives. The warrants are to be redeemed by affixing state two-cent stamps weekly. . . . Mildred H. Clark wants us to add her name to our list of people who protest against celebrating Thanksgiving Day a week earlier than formerly. She knows that day marks the beginning of Christmas shopping, but points out that moving it will mean more than four whole weeks when staple goods have disappeared from the counters and loudspeakers blare Christmas music over every necktie counter.

Herman Wolf of Stratford, Connecticut, liked T. R. Carskadon's article, "Radio Cleans House," in The New Republic for July 12. But he'd like the broadcasters to clear up the definition of a "controversial public issue." Would they refuse to sell to both unions and manufacturers during a strike? If a consumer group wants to state on the air that certain toothpastes are injurious, will it be allowed to buy time? He says he'll wait and see. . . . Wallace J. Campbell, secretary of the Coöperative League of the United States, informs us of the recent conference in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, of the coöperatives in the Canadian maritime provinces. In nine years the movement has grown to a total of 700 credit unions, grocery stores, fish processing plants and the like, affecting a quarter of a million people. The conference was sponsored by St. Francis Xavier University, whose extension staff is an active part of the movement.

L. F. Coles of New York City criticizes Melville J. Herskovits' review of W. E. DuBois' "Black Folks, Then and Now" in The New Republic for August 10. Dr. Herskovits commented—in a review generally favorable—that the problems that confront Negroes in the modern world were overstated. Mr. Coles says he is amazed at this comment. He declares that The New Republic "takes a back-handed lick every once in a while at Negroes" and doesn't print letters criticizing it for this.

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Why Coleridge?

EACH TIME I NOTE the signs of the élite boom for Kierkegaard and Kafka, I am disgruntled. It should be Coleridge. Most assuredly, it should be Coleridge. And it is largely, I suspect, because we were all compelled to read his poems in high school, that those lesser figures are focusing attention at his expense. Coleridge would not so obviously be a "discovery." Also, the tangle of these other men was much less complex; they did not even remotely have the scope of Coleridge's mentality. They did well by the stage of masturbatory adolescence—and so their scrupulous quarrels with the father may be interesting and relevant to watch. But their Hamletic labyrinth is a trivial one, in comparison with the twists and turns of Coleridge. They had many fewer cylinders to hit on—they were like a first engine; Coleridge like the engine after long development.

In his life there was a great transitional year, the *annus mirabilis* of 1797-98, wherein his gift for miraculous poetry quickly flowered and went to seed. A few anticipations (most notably, "The Eolian Harp")—and a few after-echoes (most notably "Dejection" and the second part of "Christabel")—but it is in the *annus mirabilis* that the bulk of his significant poetic output is concentrated, with the other few bits as foothills leading up to and away from this peak year.

It was a "watershed" year—a strategic shift from one slope to another. Before it, we had Coleridge the libertarian, the prophet of "Pantisocracy" (the project for a communist colony to be founded on the Susquehanna), Unitarian, the propounder of optimistic determinism. After it, we find him on the other slope, on his way to becoming Coleridge the Tory (I wince at seeming to put him in the same bin with Chamberlain), the apologist of the National Church, the Trinitarian, the exponent of original sin and free will. (It is typical of him that he proclaimed himself a "necessitarian" in the period before his enslavement to opium had become established, whereas he insisted strenuously upon the freedom of the will at a later time, when in his letters he had bemoaned the effects of "this *free-agency-annihilating* Poison," and complained that "by the long long Habit of the accursed Poison my Volition . . . was compleatly deranged.")

In the "watershed" year there was a "watershed" poem: "The Ancient Mariner," with its guilt-laden pilgrimage, no mere *allegory* of sin and redemption, but an organic sequence of internal, personal developments objectified in the imagery of external, natural marvels. The very ship on which the wanderer is driven is an aspect of the wanderer himself; it thirsts and sweats, is fixed or moves, as does the man's own body. It is a "drunken boat"—and when it sinks, something of the Mariner sinks with it. Under the accusing magnetic eye of the Sun at high noon it was—as Coleridge says of his poison—"accursed." But when "the moving Moon went up the sky," it gets release, though a dangerous release, maybe even a *lunatic* release, which would explain why the poor Pilot's boy "now doth crazy go," as the dangerous factors in the cure, effected under the ægis of moonlight, were drained off, with this nameless fellow as the recipient of the ominous charge.

But let us complete the pattern: In this "watershed" poem there was a "watershed" moment—quite where it should be, in the middle, in Part IV of a seven-part lyrical drama. It is here that a radical bit of alchemy takes place—as loathsome creatures, crawling in primeval slime, abruptly change their nature from things ugly and accursed to things blessed and beautiful. It is a kind of second creation, as though the poet had said: "Let dark be light":

> O happy living things; no tongue
> Their beauty might declare:
> A spring of love gushed from my heart,
> And I blessed them unaware.

And immediately following upon this change of identity, the Mariner, who had passed through the terrors of ice, drought and rot (in another connection, Coleridge speaks of "the Terrors that precede God's Love")—the Mariner could of a sudden pray, whereat the burdensome Albatross fell from his neck, and "sank like lead into the sea" (later, the ship "went down like lead").

A watershed moment, in a watershed poem, in a watershed year. Enough like the House That Jack Built to engage anyone in search of "critical points." Add, now, the fact that the writer of this expiatory ritual was thoroughly equipped to articulate in conceptual terms the complexity behind it. Add that, owing to the conversational, epistolary and diarist propensities of both himself and his associates, we have an almost embarrassing wealth of documents through which we can observe the personal and social situations digested in his work—and you begin to see: Why Coleridge.

Other sales points could be added. Out of idealism, both Marxism and Nazism are descended—and Coleridge is as thorough an exponent of idealism as Hegel or Schelling, plus the fact that he could write great idealistic verse, as the German metaphysicians could not (unless you take their cumbersome nomenclature to be itself a form of poetry). Nor would we have any difficulty in tracing a strict line of literary tradition from Coleridge, to Byron, Shelley, Keats and Scott, to Poe, to Rimbaud and the French Symbolists, and so to Surrealism (with "Kubla Khan" more fully meeting the requirements of the Surrealist esthetic than anything our contemporaries have done, to my knowledge, since it is the perfect instance of "automatic writing," originating in the "subconscious"—hardly other than *dictated*, with Coleridge as amanuensis, yet it is "beautiful," *i. e.*, publicly negotiable).

I said that Coleridge's poetry went to seed. It did—and the seed germinated, in a mutation, as would be fitting for one who had been through a transformational year. Most notably in "The Friend," in "Biographia Literaria" and in his scattered jottings. Even the religious tracts of his later years repay close reading, if one is interested in the mental deployments of a man with a grievous burden, struggling constantly to keep himself from falling through the bottom, and building up a vast architecture of stabilizing ideas for this incantatory, or self-admonitory end.

And the over-all situation in which he wrote is quite "contemporary"—since England then was responding to the French revolution and reaction quite as we today are

[1] Samuel Taylor Coleridge: A Biographical Study, by E. K. Chambers. New York: The Oxford University Press. 373 pages. $7.
The Life of S. T. Coleridge: The Early Years, by Lawrence Hanson. New York: The Oxford University Press. 575 pages. $5.

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responding to the Russian revolution and the Fascist reaction (an event beyond the borders that agitated even the less mobile groups within the borders, and thus had an especially strong effect upon the class of greatest mobility, the literary Romantics and political Utopians, all of whom were, to borrow the title of Wordsworth's play, "Borderers").

I could add more sales points—but these should be enough for the moment. Particularly since all this is but designed for leading up to the subject of two new biographies by E. K. Chambers and Lawrence Hanson.

The Chambers one has the merit of covering the entire course of Coleridge's life. But it gives too much the impression of a syllabus filled out with grammaticalisms. It is punctilious in verifying the exact time of day when Coleridge was where with whom and what they talked about—and thus is highly serviceable as a reference book for academic workers who may have need for this minute kind of checking.

The Hanson volume, while equally factual in its method, concentrates upon an ampler kind of fact. Its main shortcoming is that it but brings us up to the year 1800, thus leaving us with thirty-four to go, and yearning for the sequel. But it is a good job, quite able to stand by itself—and is done without the impressionistic, monographic emphasis of such works as Charpentier's "Coleridge: The Sublime Somnambulist," Fausset's "Samuel Taylor Coleridge," or Potter's "Coleridge and S. T. C."

A standard biography should probably seek to describe motivations and relationships in the most orthodox of terms: terms like "kind-hearted," "indolent," "conceited," "pretentious," "charitable," "well read," "discerning," "imaginative." This sort of description should be perfected, and amply, as the groundwork prerequisite to any experimental vocabulary of motivation. And it is the kind of description that Hanson has assembled with careful documentation. Thus, when discussing a letter in which Coleridge asseverates an intention of returning to Stowey:

> This statement of his intentions . . . sounded, at first hearing, definite enough. Yet [it] only too probably masked, and was intended partly to bolster up, a sagging purpose. That Coleridge was genuine in his wish, so often expressed, to be at Stowey, need not be doubted. But he had other wishes, at least of equal strength; and these it was he set himself, half-heartedly, to fight; employing a favorite weapon of the weak, the announcement of intentions—but promptly nullifying its effect in the next breath, by attaching to it qualifications providing easy and endless avenues of escape from the implications of his own words.

All told you get, with much relevant quotation, the portrait of the man who characterized himself perfectly when he wrote: "On dipping my foot and leg into very hot water, the first sensation was identical with that of having dipped it into very cold"—the man whose favorite maxim was "Extremes meet," and who knew how to pursue its intricacies to the ends of the universe—the man who justified a journalistic interlude by observing that the subjects of his articles were (a) "important in themselves" and (b) "excellent vehicles for general truths." It is this constant eagerness to consider local situations with reference to universal situations that gives even his most transient concerns their lastingness. And though you may very often disagree with his vote on a given issue, you must repeatedly salute his precision in singling out the issues to vote on.

KENNETH BURKE

Books in Review

The Dictatorship of the Lie

LAST MAY DOROTHY THOMPSON began whooping it up for "Die Revolution des Nihilismus," a book by a former leader of the National Socialist movement in Danzig, Hermann Rauschning. According to Miss Thompson, here was the most important book on National Socialism since Konrad Heiden's "History." This "most important book" has now been published in English as "The Revolution of Nihilism: Warning to the West," [1] and Americans may judge for themselves whether or not Miss Thompson is justified in her perfervid estimate of its contents. For myself, I learned nothing important from Herr Rauschning that I had not already learned from Peter Drucker's "The End of Economic Man," a book which Miss Thompson rather pointedly overlooked. But Herr Rauschning's volume has great corroborative value, and it derives a peculiar significance at the moment from the author's own background.

Herr Rauschning is a conservative and a nationalist, not a revolutionist. The descendant of East Prussian landowners and a veteran of the World War, Herr Rauschning originally joined the Nazi movement because he was against the inequities, the "temporary injury," of the Versailles settlement. But he resigned from the Nazi Party and from the presidency of the Danzig Senate in 1935 because he had become disgusted with a "dynamism" that showed no signs of proceeding to a point of rest and recuperation. Revolution, so Herr Rauschning argued, must come to an end; there must be a new order, a new legality, a new morality, lest the continued blaze of revolutionary energy result in the spiritual exhaustion of a whole people. The self-chosen élite of National Socialism, however, cannot bring their revolution to a close, for they are utterly devoid of any constructive principles. Unmitigated ag'iners, they can only live as long as they have enemies to fight. And their complete cynicism about "ideology" leaves them without a single positive value whence a new legality and a new morality might issue.

Herr Rauschning traces the creative impotence of the Nazi movement back to 1933, when it came into power through a "revolution-by-arrangement." This revolution-by-arrangement, says Rauschning, was achieved by an

[1] The Revolution of Nihilism: Warning to the West, by Hermann Rauschning. New York: Alliance Book Corporation. 320 pages. $3.

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"artificial combination of forces" that included "irreconcilable elements." Where genuine revolutions release creative energies, the revolution-by-arrangement merely resulted in an exhausting fight between the truly conservative forces of the German nation and the Nazi Shigalevs (named after Dostoevsky's nihilist) whose whole aim in life is to achieve and hold power. The conservatives, the nationalists and the monarchists of various hues joined hands with the Hitler movement in hopes that they could use its "dynamism" up to a point, to accomplish their own ends and then get it under control. But the "dynamism" proved too much for the more orderly supporters of the revolution-by-arrangement: the members of the new Nazi gangster élite, given the opportunity to spread their power through occupation of key positions, were so superior to the conservatives in ruthlessness and shamelessness that they shortly had complete control of the revolution.

The élite talked a lot about National Socialist ideology. They had their Rosenberg plan for a revived Teutonic Order, they had their notions of a medieval "corporativism" that would result in a harmonized society. But the need to hold power triumphed over all principles, even the lowest ones. The prolonged struggle to conquer the State by Machiavellian means, by infiltration, lying, character-assassination, slander and thievery, resulted in a survival of the opportunists; the principal Nazis, such as Roehm and Gregor Strasser, were either killed, exiled or sidetracked. Moreover, the seeming success of opportunist tactics encouraged a short-sighted feeling that the easy pickings could go on forever: Hitler, Goebbels and Goering lost all sight of the fact that the law of diminishing returns must apply to the "dynamism" of the lie. The German population probably doesn't care very much as a whole whether the French and British are bilked by Hitler's false promises or not. But when the dictatorship of the lie is extended to cover every last detail of life at home, then a people must inevitably lose all its energy and creativeness. If one does not know what the law may be three days hence, if one must live in a constant jitter of fear and anxiety, keeping one's mouth sealed lest a stool-pigeon be hiding in the closet, the only spiritual defense which one has is—the cultivation of complete personal apathy. When Herr Rauschning looks at what Hitler has accomplished since 1933 in the way of tearing up the Versailles Treaty and remaking the map of *Mitteleuropa* he is amazed. But, on second thought, he is inclined to ask: "Has it been a victory over a straw opponent?" And should that straw man ever strike back, the surprise might be so great that a "dynamism" resting on apathy would disintegrate. As I write, the Danzig issue hangs in the balance. But even if Hitler succeeds in winning a quick victory over the Poles it will not argue "strength" for National Socialism. The "dynamism" will continue until it encounters resistance; then, if Herr Rauschning is correct, it must collapse because of its inability to create an order, a morality and a legality worth fighting for at home.

The shortcomings of Herr Rauschning's book do not reside in its analysis of the cynical nature of the National Socialist leaders, which is undoubtedly as profound an analysis as Dorothy Thompson says it is. Peter Drucker made the same point about National Socialist nihilism that Rauschning makes; indeed, Drucker may have gotten much of his argument from Rauschning. But, unlike "The Revolution of Nihilism," Drucker's book carried the investigation back beyond 1933; German Fascism, says Drucker, resulted from the disillusion of the masses *with both democratic capitalism and socialism.* Both had promised freedom and equality; both had failed to deliver. Embittered by this failure, *the masses had already cast the die for Shigalevism before a single National Socialist leader had assumed power.* The West can probably win a war against Germany, but if the West can't blend freedom and equality in its own bailiwick, then the war will prove quite beside the point; Shigalevism will triumph over the world anyway. Which is something that Herr Rauschning and Miss Thompson both fail to see.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

The Home Fronts

The War Behind the War: 1914-1918, by Frank P. Chambers. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 634 pages. $2.75.

A HISTORY of the political and civilian fronts during the World War is a necessary complement to the military history, for the understanding of this major catastrophe of modern times. Mr. Chambers has done his work well. He has assimilated the great number of biographies and personal memoirs of the men who took part in the political and social events of the time, and has supplemented these with official records and current press reports and comment. By a somewhat flexible division into periods, 1914-15, 1916-17, 1918, he has carried his story forward in the thirteen countries chiefly involved, so as to enable the reader to gain a comprehensive view of the entire situation in each interval. He has preserved a complete detachment from patriotic prejudice and partiality, and has written in a tone of scrupulous fairness to men and measures.

Among aspects of the War which might be overlooked without Mr. Chambers' generalization is the fact that most of the countries engaged were faced in the early summer of 1914 with serious internal difficulties. In Germany the Social Democrats were the strongest party in the Reichstag and insistent in their demand for electoral reform. In Russia the Duma was ready to challenge the bureaucracy. Italy was rent by social disturbances "which might have broken into open revolution." Great Britain was in the throes of the Ulster controversy, sharpened by mutiny in the army. Even the United States was meeting, in a business depression, the immediate consequences of Wilson's attack on high finance. This fact may account for a readiness on the part of governments to dissolve their difficulties in war, and it may also explain in part the enthusiasm with which the masses accepted their release from internal problems. It is with horror today that we are reminded of the 300,000 Russians who stood for hours outside the Winter Palace to acclaim the Tsar as their war lord, and adjourned to sing "God Save the King" before the British Embassy; that we read of the Berliners who, after listening to the speech of the Kaiser, broke spontaneously into the hymn "Now Thank We All Our God." Mr. Chambers observes, "Far from being innocents led to the slaughter, the peoples of Europe more truly led their leaders."

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Even in America the people "went to war with all the blind ardor of the European nations in 1914." Mr. Chambers discounts the theory that the United States became involved owing to the machinations of financial barons who promoted trade in munitions until the obligations of the Allies reached a figure which compelled us to go to their rescue. He attributes more influence to "the common language and traditions, to personal ties and sympathies" with England, to "American horror of Germany's conduct of the War." That this motive will be valid in a future war is confirmed by Mr. Hoover's reported statement that a bombing from the air of London or Paris, with great destruction of life and property, will bring the United States into war on the side of England and France. At the same time it must be remembered with respect to the financial causes of American participation in the last war that the Allies were confident that loans from the United States would eventually result in our intervention, and this confidence on their part destroyed President Wilson's bargaining power as a neutral in the negotiations for peace. He had already given hostages.

From the beginning of the War an implicit conflict was on between military and civil powers. Almost at once appeared a shortage of munitions, and the military promptly seized raw materials and labor to make good this deficiency. Germany for a time maintained a balance owing to the organizing genius of two Jewish statesmen, Walter Rathenau and Albert Ballin, but in the end it was impossible to supply the needs of both army and people. Consumption of nitrates for explosives rose from 12,000 tons a month at the beginning of the War to 100,000 tons before its close, and the soil of Prussia was deprived of essential nourishment. There developed also the labor shortage which Mr. Chambers considers "that weakness to which more than any other she [Germany] must attribute her defeat." In all countries the problem of providing necessities of life for the civilian population required special administrations, and as military demands more and more restricted the supply, the morale of each country declined. This was especially the case in Russia, Austria, Italy, and finally in Germany. Russia broke in 1915, though she recovered somewhat in the next year by reason of Brusilov's victories. Austria was through in 1917. Finally, in January, 1918, Germany suffered a series of strikes which threatened a stoppage of the munitions industry. There were mutinies in the German fleet in 1917, but in general it is true, as Mr. Chambers states, that "it was the experience of all the defeated nations that the morale of the army in the field declined more slowly than the morale of the civil population."

It was the sense of this decline that inspired the tremendous oratorical barrage of 1918, and the flood of "enemy propaganda." "In August and September the British dropped 100,000 leaflets a day over the German lines. . . . The French figure was 14,000,000 for September alone." It may be asserted, therefore, that the War in its military stalemate resolved itself into a conflict of morale, in which the sense of defeat spread from the populace to the responsible ministers, Czernin and Kühlman, and thence to the army and its commanders. It is to be noted that aggressive nations today have learned the lesson, and are anticipating, instead of following, military action by a "war of nerves."

Altogether "The War Behind the War" is an indispensable study of the past, and equally valuable as a warning against a possible future. It is certain that the new war will be, more than the last, a war of peoples. The ideal of Hindenburg and Ludendorff will be then realized. "They wanted every German man, woman and child impressed into the service of the War." This will be done to maintain morale. Even the futile struggles of the nations in the last war to extricate themselves from the morass which they were aware was engulfing them all will be impossible. No stronger argument can be offered them against tempting war again than Mr. Chambers' account of their experience.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

Runs Batted In

Sailor off the Bremen, by Irwin Shaw. New York: Random House. $2.

IRWIN SHAW writes a very tight story, well joined, highly finished. On the surface, he is in the sketch-from-life genre; underneath, he is acutely conscious of cause and effect, rise and fall, the progress to a natural conclusion. Sometimes his sheer vivid skill gets away from him—as in "I Stand by Dempsey," where in his success at being tough he has forgotten to ask, On whom? Also in "Weep in Years to Come" he has neglected the magic shadow of fiction for the substance of a current attitude and faith. In general, his level is pretty near flood tide, the only completely false note being the Irish drinking yarn.

But a smooth surface for readers is often a treacherous stretch of walk for critics, abounding in pratfalls. I have been disappointed to see that Shaw is praised for his "brilliant dialogue, but—" and reviewed as a famous playwright. As for his theatre fame (without which, naturally, he would have had a tougher hoe in publishers' row), "Bury the Dead" was a topical tract at just the right time, good in theatre conception but mostly noted for its hollow rustling in the leaves of rhetoric, and as a play intrinsically bad; "The Gentle People" was a big advance and in many ways appealing and true, but still far-fetched dramatically. As a playwright, he is a better short-story writer, so far—possibly because of the necessary brevity and concision of stories.

As to dialogue—of course it's good. But so would be three pages in typescript of lines like, Who was that lady I seen you with last night? Ever since people stopped talking like characters in a Henry James novel we have had this left-handed praise for "dialogue," whereas the speech of characters cannot be truly good without revealing the characters as they are and as they grow into their proper place. The verbal give-and-take cannot be really effective unless it keeps the main action stepping, quick and forward, until the last word is the last word, the comment on something which has been seen and known, as having passed before our eyes (That was no lady, that was my wife). The important thing in these stories is that speech is used to carry the story, and that the story must have been there complete in the author's mind or you would have had nothing more in the phrases than Dadaist trick photography, crumbling on itself.

The title piece, for example, spreads its cause, brings in its people and rises to its purging effect with a present-

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tense speed and light that leaves its purely topical effects where they belong (it is a New Masses story printed by The New Yorker; it is on the edge of the deliberate shocker but so cleanly done that it will be good fiction when the word Comrade is no more topical than Girondist). Shaw's stories move with the least effort when he is in and around the fast-talkers of New York, on whatever level. "The Girls in Their Summer Dresses" is a light piece with heavy overtones, perhaps a little too subtle. "No Jury Would Convict" is not an action story but among the funniest baseball yarns I ever read. "The Boss" is in Jerome Weidman's territory, "The Greek General" in that of O'Hara and Appel; but both stand on their own. "The Monument" has no action but keeps moving because it is an obscure battleground in itself; the dignity of man is never mentioned, yet there it rises for us behind a bar in an apron. "Return to Kansas City" is complete for today and might have been written ten or a thousand years ago.

But this is not a rehearsal, not even an attempt to describe. Open the book anywhere and you'll find something that goes like the wind—and this is rare. Shaw writes with pains and with talent; but in twenty stories as thrown together, it takes something more basic to reach such an unfaltering average of runs-batted-in. Behind the rattle of good talk and the excitement of odd human types in action, there has to be a well seated appreciation of the life of the world, a full knowledge and an anxious care not only for the craft but for the material it works in. A steady writer of even the shortest stories must be a pretty tall man.

OTIS FERGUSON

New Books: A Reader's List

DON'T KILL THE GOOSE, by Ryllis and Omar Goslin (Harpers, $2.50). The essential economic facts about our country in simple words and graphic pictures. A sound and liberal approach to the present unbalance between consumption and productive capacity, with constructive proposals that go the New Deal one better.

PENSIONS OR PENURY, by Sheridan Downey (Harpers, $1). The Junior Senator from California continues his eloquent advocacy of federal pensions to the aged as a stimulant to our lagging economy. His discussion ignores the often made charges that the plan is unworkable in practice, is inequitable class legislation and must inevitably lead us to disastrous inflation.

PASSING OF THE ABORIGINES, by Daisy Bates (Putnam's, $3). The history and traditions of the passing Blackmen of Australia, by a woman who has devoted herself to their welfare for nearly forty years. As adopted Kabbarli (grandmother), witness of many ceremonials forbidden to women of the tribes, and custodian of many of their sacred objects, Mrs. Bates has a fuller collection of their culture than the aborigines themselves.

SUTTER, THE MAN AND HIS EMPIRE, by James Peter Zollinger (Oxford, $3.50). A Swiss writes a thorough and well documented biography of his incredible and romantic countryman, half hero and half actor, whose vision of an empire in California helped to prepare the region for conquest by the United States previous to the discovery of gold.

WE WERE THERE, by Twelve Foreign Correspondents (Putnam's, $3). Essays by British journalists on highlights of their work in Europe, Ethiopia and the Far East. The best of them are "Chinese Hot-Pot" and "How to Interview Mussolini." In general these international legmen have done better writing on spot news.

UNCLE LAWRENCE, by Oliver Warner (Random House, $1.50). A young English nephew visits his impoverished uncle on little Pelee Island in Lake Erie, outside the boat lanes. A simple story, full of honest feeling.

World Politics

GERMANY RAMPANT, by Ernest Hambloch (Carrick and Evans, $2.50). The latest expression of a theory preached with particular fervor twenty-five years ago: that our international troubles are due to the German character, which has "remained unchanged from the dark days of Arminius to the sinister epoch of Hitler."

THE INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF RAW MATERIAL, by Herman Kranold (Harpers, $3.50). A scientific analysis of the world's productive wealth, which explodes the myth of the division of mankind into Have and Have Not nations, and advocates international economic planning. Abundantly illustrated by statistical tables.

NATIONAL SOCIALISM AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, by Dr. Nathaniel Micklem (Oxford, $3). An investigation of the Catholics' plight in Germany, containing an excellent summary of Hitler's and Rosenberg's works, and a year-by-year history of the struggle between the Church and the Nazis. In this struggle, the author sees a conflict of ideas, rather than of expediencies.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AND WHAT TO DO WHEN WAR COMES, edited by Larry Nixon (Greystone, $2.25). Five well informed newspaper men cleverly plead for peace by discussing, on the basis of previous unpleasant experiences, the impact of war on the average individual. The long list of topics begins with the probable confiscation of property at the opening of hostilities, and ends with the "hang-over headaches" following the armistice.

THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE, by Franz Borkenau (Viking, $2). The Nazis always move in the direction of the weakest resistance, we are told here, because what they pursue is not any limited object, but world domination in the form of a "commonwealth of Fascist nations under German and Japanese guidance."

EUROPE—GOING, GOING, GONE, by Count Ferdinand Czernin (Greystone, $2.75). A survey of European politics, coupled with an eleventh-hour plea for a democratic front against the totalitarian powers, by a well bred raconteur who tries hard to be witty, and often succeeds.

DEMOCRACY TODAY AND TOMORROW, by Eduard Benes (Macmillan, $3). An exceptionally clear and vigorous restatement of the democratic credo. The former president of Czecho-Slovakia apparently reserves for a future book the really interesting things he could tell us about the mistakes a democratic state can make when struggling for survival.

Fiction

STAR-SPANGLED VIRGIN, by DuBose Heyward (Farrar and Rinehart, $2). A light-weight novel about Virgin Island

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Negroes and the time they had when the New Deal came to St. Croix. Partly burlesque, partly mystical; a fair understanding of certain primitive types, if not of convincing fiction. Readable, if only for its difference.

THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE, by Storm Jameson (Macmillan, $2.50). The heroine here is frugal, austere, precise, and so, as a rule, is Miss Jameson's prose. The plot isn't much more elaborate than a woman's growing old, but the characters are alive, the background as real and depressing as an endless drizzle.

ABEL DAYTON, by Flannery Lewis (Macmillan, $2.50). The nice, sensitive story of a boy getting wise to himself in a small town in Southern California. Not for those who demand that their novels be as exciting as the headlines; also not for those who don't think adolescence ought to last for three hundred pages.

BETWEEN THE DEVIL, by Murrell Edmunds (Dutton, $2.50). The inhabitants of this Virginia mill town are spared nothing—and Mr. Edmunds apparently sees no reason why his readers should be either. Murder, rape, vigilante committees and consumptive workers are routine. A harsh, angry novel, but not so compelling as it might be.

AMERICAN NABOB, by Holmes Alexander (Harpers, $2.50). The hero here—and he's weighed down plenty of shelves in American libraries—propels himself to wealth via the coal fields and the sweat of exploited workers. The locale is Virginia, middle of last century. A clinical, impressive, overcrowded job.

Contributors

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LOUIS FISCHER was formerly correspondent of The Daily Herald of London, and has contributed to The Nation, Current History and other periodicals. He lived for a number of years in the Soviet Union and has written several books about that country.

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KENNETH BURKE is now working on a study that attempts to codify the various modes of symbolic action, as they are revealed in the strategies of proverbs, poetry, philosophy, diplomacy, propaganda, social repartee, etc.

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